The Magazine for Golden Age and Silver Age Collectors

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

No. 24 • June 1995
A Gemstone Publication

SILVER AGE SPIDER-MAN SPECIAL ISSUE!

The Great JOHN ROMITA, SR.
Spider-Man Legend!

Spider-Man #1-50
THE RARITY & THE DEMAND

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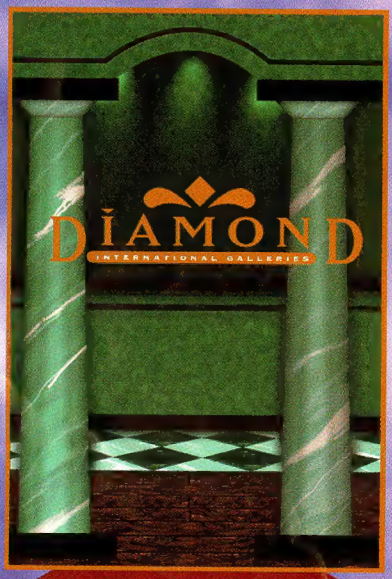

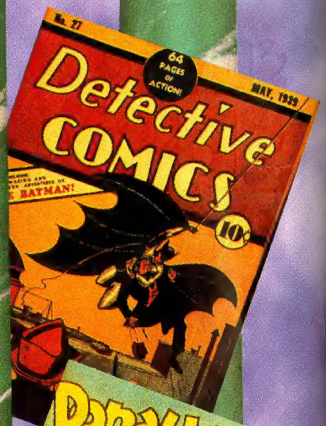

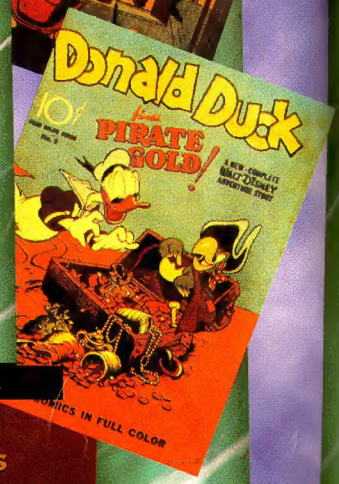

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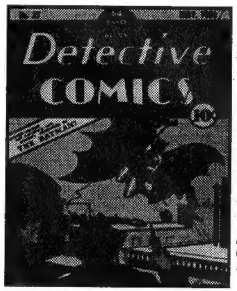

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Adventure Comics 210	$2,000	$5,000	$7,500
Adventure Comics 247	$2,500	$6,000	$10,000
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Batman 100	$1,000	$2,000	$4,000
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Detective Comics 1	$50,000	$100,000	$150,000
Detective Comics 27	$90,000	$175,000	$300,000
Detective Comics 33	$20,000	$40,000	$60,000
Detective Comics 38	$25,000	$40,000	$80,000
Fantastic Four 1	---------	$20,000	$40,000
Flash Comics 1	$40,000	$60,000	$120,000
Flash Comics 104	$4,500	$9,000	$15,000

	VFN 60	NM 80	NM/M 90
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Green Lantern 1 (GA)	$9,000	$20,000	$45,000
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Jimmy Olsen 1	$2,500	$7,500	$15,000
Journey Into Mystery 83	$2,000	$5,000	$10,000
Justice League of America 1	$2,000	$4,000	$7,500
Lois Lane 1	$1,300	$4,000	$7,500
Marvel Comics 1	$50,000	$100,000	$175,000
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More Fun Comics 55	$10,000	$20,000	$40,000
Sensation Comics 1	$6,000	$12,000	$40,000
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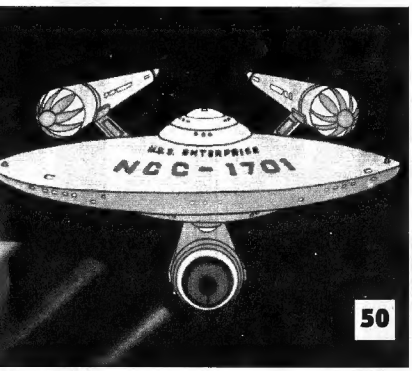

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ON THE COVER:
The famous first appearance of Spider-Man from Amazing Fantasy #15.

BELOW:
An original Spider-Man sketch by Silver Age legend John Romita Sr.

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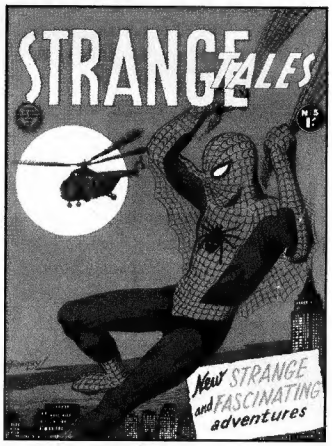
The Strangest Strange Tales...



It looks like the response to our special Spider-Man issue has been nothing short of phenomenal... even before it has gone to press it looks as if *Comic Book Marketplace* #24 may well be a sell out! Thanks to all the collectors, dealers, and shop owners all over North America (and Europe!) who have welcomed us back so enthusiastically.

Speaking of Marvel's superstar Spider-Man, most of you know I'm a hard-core DC/ACG/Atlas collector. Even so, I was swept up in the "Silver Spidey-Spirit"... especially after I read the articles in this issue. So I decided to join in the fray and share my very favorite and most prized Spider-Man comic.

It's a copy of "Strange Tales" and it is strange all right! Manufactured in Australia and distributed in England, it has a beautiful color cover with Spider-Man in glossy dark red and dark blue. My British contacts tell me it was produced in the early sixties, not very long after *Amazing Fantasy* #15 and *Spider-Man* #1 made such a successful splash on North American newsstands.

The title is intriguing enough for anyone who loves Atlas or pre hero Marvel... but the real surprise comes when you read the 24 interior pages! Turns out this amazing comic contains the entire story (in B&W sans ads) that appeared in *Amazing Spider-Man* #1!

I've shown my *Strange Tales* starring Spidey to a number of collector friends, and, to date, no one has seen another copy. I've no doubt, however, that a number of our fellow hobbyists from Great Britain have copies, and it may well be a "common" across the pond. Regardless it is still the strangest Strange Tales I've ever seen!

I hope you enjoy issue #24 as much as our hardworking staff enjoyed putting it together for you. Thanks for reading and may you fill the holes on your want list!

Gary

Gary M. Carter

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Contarino Writes

Welcome back! Enjoyed issue #22, especially Dan and Marvin's market reports. I'm sure you are aware that both referred to an article I wrote on "Ailing" Silver Age. Marvin reacted to the article as if I'd shot his dog. For people who read their reports but not my article let me enlighten them please; 1) I never, ever said high grade Silver keys or early Marvels were slow, dead, ailing, etc. I did say, and still say, NM copies of books like Daredevil 31-40 or Avengers 27-40 or even Spider-Man in the 60's - all 12¢ covers - don't sell at all if priced anywhere near Guide. Dan confirms this in his report. 2) I said, and still say, at or around Guide prices, Golden Age books represent a better deal. 3) Even Marvel keys in low to mid grade must be discounted from Guide to sell - again look at Dan's prices reported. Sure AF 15 is immune but not Avengers 1. 4) I agree with Marvin that high grade Silver DC and Marvels usually represent good value but, for God's sake, not across the board! Please don't try to tell me Metal Men today is a hot title and a great value at 2XGuide! 5) $750 for a NM/M Silver Surfer #1? I couldn't sleep at night if I sold that book at that price. Take care.

Keith Contarino, Georgia

Simply Great

I really enjoyed Silver Memories Of The Scarlet Speedster in your last issue (#23). I also always respected the character of Barry Allen/Flash as a "thinking man" who used brains more than Brawn or powers to overcome villains. Although Flash and Green Lantern were tops, I always like Adam Strange best. Great stories, great sci fi, great supporting cast, great writing and art, simply great!

Thanks for reminding me of why I loved those Silver DCs in the first place!

A. Michaelson, Indiana

Thank The Stars

My hat's off to Jon Signorelli for his excellent article on Ten More Timely Treasures in CBM #23. I can't recall being this excited about "new" comic information in a long time. Jon's explanations were great. I immediately contacted friends and collectors in other states to tell them about the piece. Please give us more articles like Jon's!!!! CBM is a breath of fresh air in a sea of new comics promotion. I thank the stars that it's back. Keep 'em comin' Jon and Gary.

Garry Gates, Nebraska

I'm happy to report that Jon Signorelli is preparing another great article even as we speak...

More Fun Query

I have a coverless More Fun with a Dr. Fate story that centers on a treasure hunt on an Island. In the second panel John Jerome Jr., says to Inza "I'm John Jerome Jr. I've read of you in More Fun Comics". Later the villain tries to turn Inza to Stone. Could you help me identify which issue of More Fun Comics I have? I would appreciate it. Thanks and continued success with the new CBM.

Andrew Epstein, New Jersey

I believe that you have a coverless copy of More Fun #63 (January 1941, A really wonderful issue! Not only is the Spectre story great, but the Dr. Fate story is a real classic too! It amazing how inconvenient it is when the indicia is on the inside front cover and then you end up with a coverless copy. I've pondered many a coverless issue in my day confronted with just such an identification dilemma. Pat Calhoun, my brother Lane, and I bought hundreds of coverless classics from the early fifties from Lannings bookstore in San Diego when we were kids. Many of those coverless books are still important childhood treasures and were the initial precode books we "cut our teeth on". Because of the removed cover (and its indicia) many remained unidentified for years. You heard it here first... if they're old enough, "coverless books can be great!"

His Fault

Scott Shaw's Oddball Archie Part I was hilarious (and informative). Please tell Scott for me that it's his fault that I'm now a hopelessly hooked 1950s Archie collector. I've even dyed my hair red and forced my wife to change her name to Betty!

Have I gone too far? My neighbors think I have. Last night we found the outline of Jughead burned into our front lawn and a note on the door that read "Mr. Witherbee hates you!"

By the way, CBM is the best collector's mag around, but no more Oddball Archie... I beg you!!!

Tony and "Betty" Anderson, Michigan

Yes you've gone too far. But don't worry... Mr. Witherbee doesn't hate anybody!

MIS #19

What can I say? Roger Hill's article on Virgil Finlay was incredible. I gained a whole new appreciation for my well-read Mystery In Space #19. I now feel lucky to have a copy! I looked at the work in "Mad Planet" and found it to be superb! My Dad and I are now hunting down those issues of Real Fact with Finlay and we can't wait to see them. Thanks for the best issue of CBM yet! I've been reading CBM since the old #4 and I don't now how you and your writers keep coming up with these great articles. Most every collector I know agrees with me when I say you're the best Magazine out there! Around here, the old CBM's are traded like vintage collectors items. Thanks for continuing the series right where it left off! A loyal fan and reader...

Joshua Logan, Texas

Thanks for your nice comments, Joshua. As for MIS #19, it has always been a personal favorite of mine. Tracking down the Finlay Real Facts can be a challenge (at least in Grade) but they are well worth the hunt. For years #5 (the Batman issue) was all anyone wanted. Then the Tommy Tomorrow issues (#6,8,13, and 16) were "re-discovered" and the race was on for those. Now it seems the whole run is experiencing new collector interest and it does my heart good... I've always enjoyed Real Fact and still find it a unique, interesting, relatively inexpensive, and quite collectible DC title.

Scarce or Scarce?

I was thrilled to see the first new issue of Comic Book Marketplace on the stands! Each and every article taught me something new and deepened my appreciation for the Golden Age and Silver Age books I love so much. If this high quality continues you have a runaway success on your hands.

Turning to other matters, I loved the "Unseen Gold" feature and hope it continues. It got me wondering about Gerber's Scarcity Index ratings. Is there a general consensus on the ratings accuracy? I ask because in some instances the Gerber rating contradicts a notation of "Scarce" or "Rare" in the Overstreet Guide. For instance, Flash #100 is listed as "Scarce" (20 to 100 copies exist) in the Overstreet Guide but has a Gerber SI of 5 (200 to 1000 exist) in Gerber.

Finally, in an issue of your Quarterly some time ago, a reader wrote in asking about an issue of Adventure Comics in which Superboy seemingly teamed up with Superman. The issue is #216. Thanks for your time, and congratulations again on the new CBM.

Chris Gage, California

Both the authors you site use estimates. The actual number of copies of any book still in existence will always be an estimate because no one can ever know if all copies have been discovered and/or publicly inventoried. Not only is pinpointing the exact number of existing copies of books residing in the US an impossibility, but when you add the number of potential issues in Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and the rest of the world, whew... the task seems daunting to say the least. "Number-of copies-in-existence" estimates are interesting but I feel it's important to keep in mind that they are just that... estimates. Thanks for addressing such a good topic and for sending along the Adventure #216 info.

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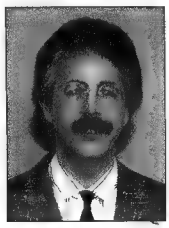
CBM STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT

Michael Naiman Selected



Comic Book Marketplace and Gemstone Publishing, California is pleased to announce that Michael Naiman has been selected for the position of Advertising Director.

Michael Naiman comes to CBM with an impressive resume in the field of comic book collecting. During his tenure as Silver Age Pricing Editor for Overstreet Publications (1993-95), Michael expanded the Overstreet Advisors network to include representatives from nearly every state and many foreign countries. While working on the "Big Guide" in 1994 and 1995, he had the opportunity to develop close relationships with many comic book advisors, collectors, and fans throughout North America. A member of the General Advisory Committee to the Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide and a Special Advisor to the Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide, Michael frequently contributes articles to numerous fan publications, including the "original" CBM, the original Overstreet Comic Book Monthly, and to the new CBM.

Currently the Treasurer of the AACC (American Association of Comicbook Collectors), Michael is also a member of the AACC's Authenticity, Certification, and Grading sub committee and participated in the comic grading for the Sotheby's and Christie's auctions of 1992-94.

Mr. Naiman is an avid comic collector and researcher and is one of America's leading authorities on Carl Barks collectibles, Don Rosa collectibles, and Disney "duck" memorabilia. Michael received his Bachlors Degree from San Diego State University in 1974.

Those interested in contacting Michael can do so at (619) 465-2669 (COMX). CBM is pleased to welcome Michael aboard!

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27 VG/F 300
51 G + 125
94 F 125
154 F 120
164 VG ++ 120
252 VG 225

ADVENTURE COMICS
53 G white pgs. 200
112 VF w/tr 175
300 VF 240

ALL STAR
#2 VF w/2 sm. ch., 5 sm. trs., owl 10 rare 4000

ALL FLASH
2 F 500

ALL STAR WESTERN
58 (#1) F 125

ATOM
#1 VG 150

BATMAN
4 VG - 750
8 Fr 275
12 G + 350
14 F/VF w p.o. 395
16 G - 425
17 Fr 125
18 G/G - 250
19 G 130
22 VG/F 275
23 VG Joker 380
26 G 110
27 F + w/p.o. 125
30 VG w/p.o. 160
43 G + 100
53 VG/F 180
54 VG/F 180
56 VG 120
62 VG/F 295
67 VG + 135
67 VG 100
71 VG + 125
77 VG 125
84 F + 200
97 VG + 100
108 F + 120
108 F 105
110 F Joker 125
112 VF - 200
120 F/VF 110
234 NM - Two Face 125
Ann #1 VG/F 110

BRAVE & THE BOLD
28 Poor 1st JLA 100
29 G/VG 2nd JLA 240
30 VG 3rd JLA 280
30 G/VG 3rd JLA 190
30 G 3rd JLA 140
34 VG - 1st Hawkman 175
36 F 100

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN
3 VG Kirby 100
4 F/VF Nice 250
4 VG + Kirby 100
7 VG + Kirby 100

COMIC CAVALCADE
7 VG 170
20 F - 180

DETECTIVE COMICS
54 G - 135
87 F+ b.c. rep 300
88 F + 395
104 NM 750
106 VG 115
107 F 190
112 F + rest 150
113 F 190
125 VG + 140
127 VG 110
130 G/VG 100
138 VG 195
144 VG 100
147 VG 100
162 VF - 495
163 F 170
172 F 170
177 F 170
177 F - 125
190 VG/F 130
200 F + 200
229 VF - 175
243 F + white 110
246 VF lt. st. 110
263 VF 130
276 VF/NM 110

EIGHTY PAGE GIANTS
1 VF - Superman 195

FLASH COMICS (G.A.)
4 VG + 595
52 F 275

THE FLASH
105 VF - 2000
105 G 350
114 F 100
117 VF 160
123 VG 175
175 VF/NM race 125

GIRLS ROMANCE
1 F photo cover scarce 125

GREEN LANTERN (G.A.)
5 G - 110

GREEN LANTERN
2 VG 150
5 F 100
8 VF 140

HAWKMAN
1 VF 375

JUSTICE LEAGUE
1 G/VG 340
1 G - 170
1 G - 170
2 VG 130
2 VG - 110
2 G/VG 100
3 F - 125
3 VG + 115
3 VG 105
12 VF + 140
21 F + 120

LEADING COMICS
1 G/G - 475

LEGENDS OF DANIEL BOONE
1 VG/F 140
1 VG 110

MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY
1 F + rest. 110

MORE FUN
70 G 225
88 F 400
91 G 100

MYSTERY IN SPACE
54 VF - 225
87 VF 150

SHOWCASE
3 VG 200
4 AF 1st S.A. Flash 3500
5 VG 250
7 F 500
8 VG 1400
12 F 400
12 Fr/G 95
13 VG 495
13 G/VG 350
14 VG 550
16 VG + 200
17 VG 300
19 VG 200
19 G 110
24 VG - 170
25 F - 90
27 F 275
27 VG 130
27 G/VG 110
29 F + 150
34 G 110
34 G 110
34 G - 80
35 F/VF 300
35 F 250
35 G + 110
36 VF 400
36 VG 120
36 G 60
37 F 150

STRANGE ADVENTURES
4 VG 100
5 F 140

SUPERBOY
1 on the way
68 VG/F 1st Bizarro 120

SUPERMAN
4 (C) 130
8 VF/NM owl 10 rare 3000
18 VG/F 320
34 G + 100
37 F 250
40 F 220
41 VG/F 145
44 F + 210
44 VG 100
49 F + 225
52 F + 175
55 VG 120
84 F 100
92 F/VF 130
94 F/VF 130
96 F/VF 130
99 VG/F 70
1953 3-D G 125
"Superman's Time Capsule" scarce
1955 giveaway F 125

WORLD'S FINEST
37 VG - 140

MARVEL

AMAZING SPIDERMAN
2 F 615
2 G + 250
3 VG/F 375
5 VG 200
5 G 100
6 VG 195
7 F + 265
8 F + 250
8 VG 120
10 F 190
16 F + 120
16 F 100
17 F/VF 225
17 VG 110
18 F/VF 110
23 F/VF 140
23 F 120
97 VF/NM 95
100 VF/NM 195
100 VF/NM 195

AVENGERS
1 VG - 350
2 VG 125
3 F 110
4 VG 199
5 VF - 100
6 VF 110
7 VF 110
8 VF 110
9 VF + 140
12 VF/NM 100
15 VF/NM 100
16 VF/NM 110

CAPTAIN AMERICA
100 F/VF 140

CONAN
1 VF 150
3 VF 120

DAREDEVIL
1 VG 265
1 G + 225
2 F/VF 185

FANTASTIC FOUR
1 VF - 8950
1 VG 1900
1 Fr/G 695
2 F + 750
2 VG/F 475
3 F lt. ws. 500
5 VG/F white 425
6 G/VG 140
6 G 100
7 VG 100
8 F 225
8 VG 120
9 F 225
9 VG 140
10 F 200
10 VG 140
11 VG 110
12 VG + 175
12 VG 140
25 F + 125
26 VF - 150
112 NM 100
Annual #1 F 180
Annual #1 VG/F 120

INCREDIBLE HULK
1 VG - 900
2 G/VG 190
2 G - 140
3 VG/F 250
3 G + 160
4 VG 170
5 VG 170
6 VF (75) 800
6 Fr/G 105

IRON MAN
1 VG 100

JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY
83 VG 1st Thor 595
84 VG + 210
85 F 140
85 VG/F 120

MARVEL SPOTLIGHT
5 VF 1st Ghost Rider 110

SILVER SURFER
1 F/VF 180
1 F + 170
1 F 140
3 VF 110
3 VF 110
4 VF 325
4 VG/F 105

STRANGE TALES
107 F classic cover 85
115 VG 100
Annual #2 VG 90

TALES OF SUSPENSE
40 F/VF 480
40 VG - 160
41 195
41 VG + 150
41 VG 130
45 VF 225
59 F 90

TALES TO ASTONISH
27 F - 1st Antman 575
35 F/VF 525
35 F + 425
35 F 325
35 VG/F 250
38 VF - 130
40 F/VF 105
41 F + w/name inside 100

X-MEN
2 VG 200
3 VG/F 110
4 F + 130
5 F + 110
6 VF 130
15 VF w 1/4" tr. 100

GOLDEN AGE

Air Fighters V1 #5 G/VG 95
All Top 13 VG 120
Amazing Adventures (ZD) 6 F 90
Americas Best 2 G/VG 95
Boy 31 NM 110
Bruce Gentry 5 NM 120
Blue Beetle 46 VG 95
Buck Rogers 2 G 120
Classics 26 F + (orig.) 110
Clue Comics 11 NM 110
Feature Book 48 F 150
Fight 62 VF/NM 100
Four Color 29 G 500
Gorgo 1 F + 100
Green Lama 2 G 85
Haunt of Fear 4 F - (1950) 140
Ibis 5 F 110
Joe Palooka 7 NM 90
Konga 1 F/VF 90
Modern 95 NM + 160
Our Flag 2 G - 180
Out of the Night 1 F/VF 160
Planet 18 G 200
Pogo Parade F nice 110
Shock Suspense 1 F/VF 250
Space Squadron 5 F 190
Star Presentations 3 F 145
Tales of Myst. Traveler 6 F + 110
Tales from the Crypt 29 F + 120
Terrytoons 1 F/VF 450
Weird Science 20 F 110
Whiz 84 VF 110
Wonderworld 10 VG/F 350

Three Underwater Winners!

Although underwater covers are cool, and these three are all great examples thereof, the cover theme is really a happy pretext that gives us a chance to examine three nicely diverse mid/late-1940s issues of anthology titles from three important publishers. The interiors of these comics are a match for the covers, containing a host of fascinating features that encompass a wide range of genres, from superhero to humor, to crime, to history, to jungle adventure, and various whimsical and bizarre points in between.

Early & Rare Krigstein

Treasure Comics #5 (February/March, 1946) from Prize Publications is one of those "sleeper" titles one hears so little of, but to actually look at this issue shows an abundance of memorable material and at least one strip of historical significance. The cover is a delicately drawn scene from the Marco Polo story. Paul Bunyan leads off the inside. The secret of adapting a character like this overgrown lumberjack is to never question the hokiness of the concept. We're talking entertainment here, and, if this big galoot amuses us, then the job is done. In this episode Paul goes to college where his brawn seems to promise a star spot on the football team - if only his bumpkin brain could master the basics of the game. When he runs 95 yards the wrong way to score a winning safety (for the other team), it's back to the backwoods for Paul. It's an enjoyable strip and whoever drew it had an engaging style. (If you know the artist, contact us here at *CBM*.)

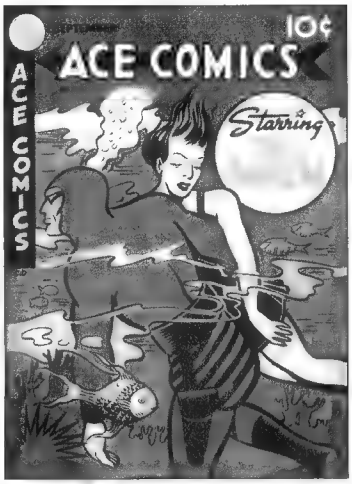
The Arabian Knight is a young man of old Baghdad whose "formula" exploits are enlivened by a lot of ancient atmosphere. It's okay, but certainly nowhere nearly as distinguished as Dr. Styx, which is the strip I alluded to earlier as a key entry in the four-color encyclopedia. This is because this strip is the best place to see Bernie Krigstein developing the talent that would lead to his incredible work for EC and Atlas in the early 1950s. Within this framework of standard supernatural mumbo-jumbo, glimmerings of artistic excellence are quite evident.

Next comes "Know Your America", and this issue's entry is a four-page biography of Peter Stuyvesant, "the peg-legged... Dutch governor of what is now New York". I've grown quite fond of these historical vignettes because the compressed life stories do not follow the rigid patterns of most hero and adventure strips. Marco Polo wraps things up with his tale of the discovery of a race of fish-people under the Indian Ocean. While not outstanding, it's a good old-fashioned story with good old-fashioned art.

Schomburg's Airbrush Art

Our second "underwater winner," *Startling Comics* #52 (July, 1948), features the airbrush art of Alex Schomburg on the cover in a dazzling display of technique, anatomy, and imagination. This mag hailed from Better Publications, a pulp publisher also known (earlier) as Nedor, and (later) as Standard, and then Pines. Tygra has the lead spot inside– her story begins with a full-page splash panel where only slowly does the appreciation of her elegant pose give way to the realization that she's just cut some guy's throat. The "jun-gal" was ubiquitous in late1940s anthologies, and here Artie Saaf's art combines with a solid plot to produce a prime example of the species.

The Lance Lewis, Space Detective story does not contain the cover scene (although those are Lance and Myrna on the cover) but is another workmanlike offering in another popular genre, sci-fi. Of course S-F really came into its own in the early 1950s; these Better books were among the first postwar comics to showcase this subject matter. And the humor feature here, chronicling the teenage antics of Jefferson Jones, is hilarious. When his high school has a "go-



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ACE COMICS #130
(Sep 1949) A gorgeous cover for the next to the last issue of a long-running reprint title.

BY PAT S. CALHOUN

©Prize Publications, Inc.

to-it week" contest to see who can earn the most money, Jefferson tries his hand at baby-sitting. He leaves three tots in his jalopy (parked pointing downhill, of course), and when one releases the park brake a wild joy-ride through downtown begins. It's all deftly packaged with a happy ending and drawn with a light-hearted realism by Al Hartley.

Jungle heroine, space detective, hepcat... throw in a pirate and you round out that full Golden Age anthology flavor. And, if it's drawn in that great "grade B" style of the era, me-thinks the Sea Eagle shall fare well. Indeed, this one's everything it should be: "The Sea Eagle, whose ringing challenge and flashing blade was ever ready to defend the freedom of the seas!"

TREASURE COMICS #5 (Feb-Mar 1946) Although this is the only underwater cover of *Treasure*'s 12-issue run, it does go well with the sunken pirate treasure in the title logo.

STARTLING COMICS #52 (Jul 1948) "Have no fear - I'll protect the bathysphere!" This is the next to the last issue of *Startling*.

© O Better Publications

Fabulous Phantom

Ace Comics #150 (September, 1949) is a superb "late-in-the-game" example of newspaper reprint comics. Such comic books were the first modern comic books, and the Phantom, who debuted in 1936 and stars on this beautiful cover, was an early influence on comic book superheroes. Unless you amass runs of these books, one problem arises in that most of the stories are "to be continued"... But the Phantom episode in this issue is a complete incident, anyway, as "a dragon god matches wits with the ghost who walks" in "War Drums In Wambesi". It's smooth storytelling. The Katzenjammer Kids are here too, a guarantee of both mirth and mayhem. Then there are four pages of Jungle Jim, which are handsome enough but a lot of panels go by before much action occurs.

Blondie gets in three gags in two pages—it's a pleasant visit with one of the most enduring families of newspaper funnies. But the real payoff this issue is the eleven-page Rip Kirby extravaganza that closes the book. Rip Kirby is a super-sophisticated private investigator, comfortable among the glitterati high-society types that he usually investigates. Yes, a story begins here that does not end here, but so engrossing is it that the frustration of the "cliffhanger" is overwhelmed by the delight of having witnessed even the unconcluded narrative magic that Alex Raymond has created. Pagan Lee, one of Rip's old flames, is taking Hollywood by storm in her new identity as Madelon when some con artist, who knows of the nefarious events of her past in Europe, plans blackmail. There is a depth of character here that's captured by a perfect marriage of words and images. Even *Ace* #151 fails to wrap the Kirby yarn up, and it is the last issue of the title... David McKay began publishing comics in 1936, when King Features Syndicate approached him with their popular newspaper characters, and they kept at it until the industry trends moved away from reprint books in the early 1950s. ■

Pat S. Calhoun has been collecting, researching, and appreciating comic books since the early 1960s, and is a nationally recognized comic book historian.

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All American 16/19
Batman 1
Capt. America (1)-10
Red Raven 1

Others are:

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Mystery Men 1-10
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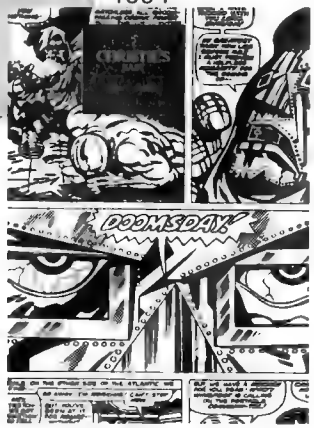

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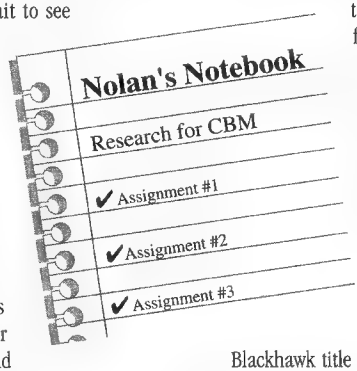
Machines Of Menace!

If you were a youngster searching for an intriguing comic in the dark days after the institution of the Comics Code Authority (some 40 years ago), one title remained as spicy as ever, if not as sexy. Blackhawk, filled with tales of the knights of the Cold War skies, never disappointed. During the tumultuous 1950's, the Blackhawks survived not one, not two, but three publishing threats to their existence!

When it came to bizarre covers in the post-code period, nothing stood out on the newsstands and the comic racks like the Blackhawks, thanks largely to a series of the weirdest machines ever seen in fiction. It's easy to imagine the folks at Comics Code Headquarters, scratching their heads as they reviewed covers that featured "The Steel Colossus", "The Flying Cutlass", "The Fantastic Flying Airport", "The Mechanized Sky Raiders", and "The Flying Tank Platoon". And if you were young then, you couldn't wait to see what mad scientist's gimmick would threaten the Blackhawks, who were the only team of fantastic heroes in the entire comics field in the years between the end of the original Justice Society of America in 1951 and the creation of the *Challengers of the Unknown* in 1957.



The Blackhawks, who debuted in *Military Comics* #1 (a few months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War II), were born of war but were never threatened by peace. Unlike most of their fantastic costumed jut-jawed counterparts, the Blackhawks never missed a beat—or a beating—in the years after the war ended. They fought an endless series of exotic spies (more often than not female), mythical dictators (in equally mythical Eurasian dictatorships), mad scientists, and the like. The stories appearing in *Modern Comics* (*Military* became *Modern* with issue #44, November, 1945) and *Blackhawk Comics* (which began with #9 in the winter of 1944-45 and was formerly titled *Uncle Sam Quarterly*) were a fascinating potpourri of potboilers. They were then, and remain today, endless fun for those whose imaginations aren't fettered by political, diplomatic, and legal niceties. In short, Blackhawk was entertaining Robin Hood balderdash spiced by idealism and romance.

BY MICHELLE NOLAN

When the Blackhawks faced the first publishing threat to their survival, the many fantastic machines of menace still hadn't been conceived. Quality Comics published many highly collectible super hero comics throughout the 1940's with art from the Eisner shop, but the company banked too heavily on the romance craze of 1949. (Quality started no fewer than 14 love titles!) When familiarity began to breed the reader's contempt in 1950, and with more than 100 romance titles competing on the stands in any given month, the "market for mush" drastically declined midway through the year. This comic book marketplace turn-of-events nearly took Quality away, too.

Everett "Busy" Arnold's publishing concern, which spewed out 30 different titles in the first half of 1950, canceled 22 of those titles between May and October. The company already had revamped its long-running super hero-led anthology comics a few months earlier, but now titles were disappearing on a frighteningly regular basis. All 14 of the love titles were canceled; three resumed publication during the spring and summer of 1951 and another started up again in 1952.

Blackhawk, however, was so successful in 1950 that Quality increased the title's publication frequency from bi-monthly to monthly beginning with issue #33 in October, 1950. Part of this increase in demand for the Blackhawk title was probably due to the demise of the monthly *Modern Comics*, which carried Blackhawk as its lead feature until it expired with issue #102 (also dated October, 1950. Quality apparently figured it was most sensible (and profitable) to publish a single, monthly *Blackhawk* title. The only other Quality titles (all bi-monthly) to escape unscathed from the implosion of 1950 were *Buccaneers, Candy, Crack Western, Dollman, Marmaduke Mouse, Plastic Man*, and *Police* (and *Buccaneers* expired in May of 1951, to be replaced by one of the revived romance titles).

Research by comic book data expert Dan Stevenson shows that Quality, which published 153 issues in 1950—trailing only Fawcett, Dell, DC, and Marvel—published only 84 issues in 1951. Other than the three revived romance titles, the company started only two new titles in 1951... *T-Man* in September and

Ken Shannon in October (both crime titles).

Given such a dire economic turnabout, it's easy to see that Blackhawk was one of the most popular titles of its time. But two more menaces (the creation of the Comics Code Authority and the death of Quality Comics itself) remained to be conquered later in the 1950's. Amazingly, the Blackhawks had survived the purge of 1950, healthier than ever! (As an aside, it is odd to note that even after canceling 22 titles, Quality increased the page count to 52 pages for its remaining eight titles, and didn't go back to 36 pages for a year).

Even so, there was a sameness to many of the Blackhawk stories. The Blackhawks battled a seemingly endless series of female villains, almost all with vaguely Eurasian names including the likes of Morla, Delya, Fata, Tama, Morella, Luvea, Lila, Ina, Tarya, Aurora, Troisa, Nicola, Maia, Orpha, Golda, Spectra, and Amora. This was too much even for Andre, the French member of the team who so often was seen lamenting how unfair it was that Blackhawk either wound up wooing a woman or succumbing to her wiles. By 1951, it was clear that a new gimmick was needed to sustain reader interest.

The first such "machine of menace" appeared in #41 (dated June, 1951), with a cover blurb screaming; "Flying Tanks! Is It Possible? Can It Happen?" and the terrified face of Blackhawk turning to see three tanks flying over a mountain range. The story, obviously a take-off based on the Korean War, gives an Asian tyrant flying tanks to use against freedom fighters until the Blackhawks finally manage to shoot them down. There is no explanation of where the tanks came from or how they work—but they fly! So did this type of story, although it took a while to "take off", so to speak.

Before the next mechanical marvel was to appear, the Blackhawks were featured in one of the most bizarre comic books of all time. Issue #43 (August, 1951) with the cover feature "Terror from the Catacombs," features "Unholy Horror in an Underground Empire". In the other three stories, Blackhawk becomes temporary president of the mythical nation of Fusang, fights a nutcase named Captain Ravage, and defeats tiny black aliens from the planet Ur, who are sporting curled mustaches, dressed in pleated pink miniskirts and led by a villainous sort named Izmar. As Chop Chop, the Blackhawks' faithful Chinese partner, blurts out in horrendously stereotypical fashion (these were the non-PC days), "Who Be These Fellers? They Not Look Like Anybody Me Ever See!"

CBM Checklist: **Machines Of Menace**

- ❑ #41 June 1951 "The Flying Tanks" cover ($55)
- ❑ #49 February 1952 "The Hell Divers" cover ($55)
- ❑ #54 July 1952 "Monsters of the Deep" (Octopus Machine) ($55)
- ❑ #55 August 1952 "The Rocketmen" ($55)
- ❑ #56 September 1952 "The War Wheel" cover ($55)
- ❑ #57 October 1952 "The Terrible Termite Tanks" ($55)
- ❑ #61 February 1953 "The World Destroyer" cover ($50)
- ❑ #63 April 1953 "The Sky Monster" & "The Killer Buzz Saws" ($45)
- ❑ #64 May 1953 "The Incredible Flying Submarines" cover ($45)
- ❑ #66 July 1953 "The Crawler"($45)
- ❑ #69 October 1953 "The Cyclone Terror" cover ($45)
- ❑ #74 March 1954 "The Sky Sleds" cover ($45)
- ❑ #75 April 1954 "The Flying Cannon" cover ($45)
- ❑ #77 June 1954 "The Jet Propelled Terror" cover ($45)
- ❑ #79 August 1954 "The Monstrous Destroyer Drill" ($45)
- ❑ #80 September 1954 "The Death Digger" cover ($45)
- ❑ #81 Oct-1954 "The Flying Flat-Top" cover & "The Monster Dynamo" ($42 50)
- ❑ #82 November 1954 "The Giant Kites" cover ($42.50)
- ❑ #85 February 1955 "The Fire Wheel" cover ($42.50)
- ❑ #86 March 1955 "The Weapon For Conquest" cover (last pre-code issue, $42.50)
- ❑ #90 July 1955 "The Storm King" ($55)
- ❑ #91 August 1955 "The Steel Colossus" cover ($35)
- ❑ #92 September 1955 "The Flying Cutlass" ($35)
- ❑ #93 October 1955 "The Floating Fortress" cover ($37.50)
- ❑ #98 March 1956 "The Ducted-Fan Aircraft" cover ($35)
- ❑ #99 April 1956 "The Underground Menace" cover ($35)
- ❑ #100 May 1956 "The Mechanized Sky Raiders" cover & "The Steel Scorpion" ($35)
- ❑ #101 June 1956 "The Flame Ray" cover ($35)
- ❑ #102 July 1956 "The Fantastic Flying Airport" cover ($35)
- ❑ #106 November 1956 "The Flying Tank Platoon" cover ($35)
- ❑ #107 December 1956 "The One-Man Helicopters" cover (last Quality issue, $35)

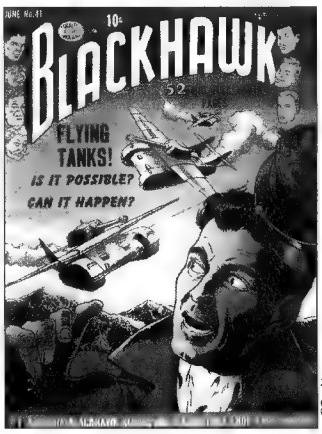
(All values listed are the latest Fine condition price per Overstreet Annual #25.)

Comics just don't get any more amazing than this!

Mr. Izmar was one of the first alien menaces the Blackhawks ever faced, but it didn't take long for the team to return to Earth, even if the strange story lines didn't. By issue #49 (February, 1952)), the Blackhawks were facing "The Furious Assault of the Hell Divers, Super-Sonic Planes from the Depths of the Earth". From that point on, Blackhawk was to last five years under the Quality seal, never missing a month until the final Quality issue, #107 (December, 1956). In those 60 Quality issues from 1952-56, the Blackhawks fought weird machines no fewer than 31 times, most of them cover featured (see CBM Checklist: Machines Of Menace).

There were "The Flying Cannon," "The Rocketmen," "The Terrible Termite Tanks," "The War Wheel," "The Crawler," "The Monstrous Destroyer Drill," "The Flying Flat-Top," "The Giant Kites," "The Sky Sleds" and so many others. Andre doubtless preferred the female spies, but the machines of menace were obviously a big hit with readers, or they wouldn't have continued to appear so often. Even the second publishing menace that threatened the Blackhawks, the Comics Code, didn't dent the parade of strange menaces, although Quality was forced to tone down the titles a bit. The Code wouldn't allow certain words, so titles such as "The Cyclone Terror" and "The Sky Monster" were no longer allowed. But the Blackhawks continued, undaunted by the Comics Code (the first Code-approved issue is #87, April, 1955).

One of the most famous, most recognizable, and definitely most outrageous "machines of menace" was "The War Wheel," which made its first appearance in #56 (September, 1952). The gigantic spiked wheel threatened the freedom-loving democracy of Malkaria, plowing right over Blackhawk himself! But, in one of the funniest scenes in the history of heroes, a muddy blob emerges from the road. Blackhawk had saved himself by diving into the mud, and, as he put it, "When I saw those spikes coming at me, I dived at the mud and placed myself so that the spikes spanned me but never touched me! The weight of the wheel didn't hurt me much because it only pressed me down deeper in the soft mud!" To which Andre replies, "Mon Dieu! You are unbeatable, mon ami! Your brain ees always quick on ze trigger!" "Aw, shucks," replies Blackhawk, ever the modest sort: "I've had my share of luck." To be sure!



The Blackhawks combined human interest with inventiveness in "The Sky Sleds" (#74, March, 1954). A young boy in a European democracy invents a miniature flying jet, which an unscrupulous secretary of defense converts into personal flying jets for the bad guys. So equipped, these bad guys befuddle the Blackhawks' less maneuverable jets until the boy finds a way to foil them with a warning. The Blackhawks wind up sending him to engineering school. This type of plot is a real departure from the stories of just a few years earlier… there's not a female spy in sight!

But even the likes of Blackhawk and Andre can't keep a good woman (or a bad one) down. A few issues later (#85, February, 1955), who should appear but a buxom costumed communist female villain named Comrade Flame, complete with a most fearsome weapon… the Fire Wheel! But, when the Blackhawks find a way to foil her, she screams, "I'll get sent to Siberia for my failure!" And, in the familiar flying-jet singing panel that ended so many Blackhawk stories, the Blackhawks sing "Though the fires of Communism still burn, though red flames of slavery still flare, it is to the sky that hopeful eyes turn, for our speedy jets fly everywhere—we're Blackhawks"! Ah, the memories!

With a nod to the decorum expected under the Comics Code, Quality toned down its "Machines of Menace" a bit for the final 21 issues under the company's banner, although they remained as inventive as ever. Consider titles such as "See the Ducted-Fan Aircraft in the Temple of Doom" in #98 (March, 1956). Two of the comics I fondly remember buying off the

BLACKHAWK #107
(Dec 1956) The last issue published by Quality Comics. "See the one-man helicopters in THE WINGED MENACE."

BLACKHAWK #41
(Jun 1951) "Is it possible? Can it happen? FLYING TANKS!"

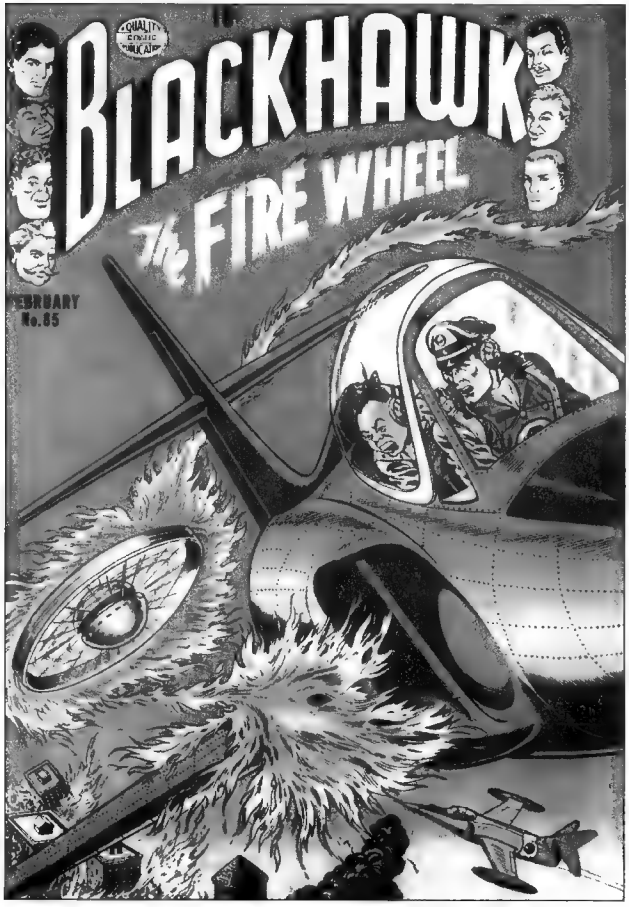
BLACKHAWK #43 (Aug 1951) 52 big pages included "Unholy horror in an underground empire... read Terror from the Catacombs!"

BLACKHAWK #85 (Feb 1955) "The Fire Wheel" hit the stands just before the Comics Code.

stands were #106 (November 1956) with "The Flying Tank Platoon" (an improved version of the original flying tank story, albeit much less violent) and #107 (December, 1956) with "The Winged Menace, the One-Man Helicopters".

I think it's worth noting here that the 1955-56 issues seem much scarcer than many of the earlier issues, perhaps due to Quality's impending finish as a comic book imprint. The Gerber *Photo Journal* lists these issues as common, but I can't agree. Some of the 1956 issues are almost impossible to find, especially in high grade. It is true that the scarcest issues are probably the 52-page issues from 1951 (#34-44), many of which can be extremely difficult to locate. But I wouldn't underestimate the scarcity of the 1955-56 issues!

The Blackhawks survived their third and final publishing peril of the 1950s, when Quality sold the rights to its titles to National Comics (DC). *Blackhawk* still must have been one of the better selling comics, because *Blackhawk* and GI Combat were the only titles that DC carried over on a monthly basis. Robin Hood was continued under DC for issues #7-14, doubtless because of popular syndicated television show of the period which starred Richard Greene. Heart Throbs was continued as a bi-monthly romance comic. Under DC, the weird machines made an occasional appearance, but the stories turned from intrigue and fantasy politics to tales featuring aliens, costumed villains, monsters, and the like. In many respects, Blackhawk basically became another DC science-fiction title. But those of us who remember those "Quality" days won't ever forget when each new issue of Blackhawk sent our imaginations soaring into the clouds right along with the seven Blackhawks.



The last song the Blackhawks ever sang after a case in a Quality issue was in the middle story of #106. The words seem a fitting epitaph to the end of a comic book legend... "In real-life fight, or make believe, we smash each web the tyrants weave—we're Blackhawks!" ■

Michelle Nolan's a nationally recognized collector and researcher of comic book from '40s through the '60s. She has one of the most extensive collections of 1950s comic books in the U.S. and has contributed volumes of data to the Overstreet Price Guide.

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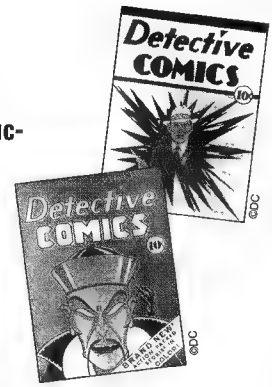

Batman #1 FN-56
Unrestored with white paper

More Fun #53 VF75
Owl 9.5

More Fun #54 FN71
More Fun #55 FN70

More Fun #56 FN74
More Fun #67 FR14
Top 1/2 of #64 missing

More Fun #18 & #19 VG45

More Fun #54 App. VF-77

New Book of Comics FN63

Famous Feature Funnies #1 VF83
Crackajack #7, #9, #15-17
#19, #200, #22, #23, #25
#27, #29, #30-#32, #35

Walt Disney C & S #2, #3, #7

Detective Comcs #1 App. VF-76

Detective Comics #4 App. FN 64
(Consultants grade)

Detective #8 FN 71 Owl 8.5

Detective #10 VG44

Detective #12 VG42

Detective #8 App. FN67
(Consultant grade)

Detective #14, #16 FN-55

Detective #32 App. FN+71
Adventure #37, #49, #54 GD39

Detective #38 FN-59

Detective #30 App. FN+70

Batman #1 App. VG48
Batman #2 FN65

Batman #6, #11, #13 #18, #19 FN+73

Batman #2 VG+53

Detective #27 Unrestored VG+49
Owl 7.5-8 Very Attractive!

All-American #16 App. VG46
All-American #17 VG45
(Consultant grade)

Green Lantern #8, #12, #13, #14, #16, #20. #29, #32 FN58
(Consultant grade)

All-American #28, #31, #65, #66, #68, #72, #90 FN66 (Consultant grade)

Flash #4 App. FN-56

Detective #37 VG52
Detective #58, Batman #8 & Action #42
GD31; Flash #16 FN+72

Flash #17 VF-76
Detective #50 VF-78

All Star #3 App. FN-57

All Star #4 App. VF75

All Star #5 VF80
All Star #6 FN-60
All Star #7 VF85

All Star #8 FN+69

All Star #8 App FN 58
(Consultant Grade)

All Star #5, #6, #, #9, #11-#13 VG43
All Star #8 VG-39

Action #1 App. VF-78
Min mum restoration extra white paper

Original silver print hand colored to cover of Action #1 with proof of litho to
covers of Action #7 & #19

Action #3 App. VF80
Superman #4 VG45
(Consultant grade)

Action #5 App. FN65
Action #11, #13, #15, #22, #23 VG47

Superman #15-#17, #18 (2) #24 & #26
VG+53
w/ Superman giveaway pin and paste on copy from publisher

Action #15, #19, #22
Superman #11, #25, #33, #50
(no grade given)

Detective #45, #68 & #69
(no grade given)

Detective #48, #56, #60, #66 & #86 App. FN57

Adventure #61 FN58 Owl 8 5-9

Flash #5
Worlds Finest #2 & #13 (no grade)

Adventure Comics #53 VF-76
Adventure Comics #68 & #69 VF81
Owl 8.5-9

Batman #5, #7, #9, #11, #12 & #15
(no grade)

Batman #12, #16, #18, #26, #29, #32, #36 (2), #38, #42, #50, #52, #53 & #55 Rest. on some VG49

Batman #5, #6, #15, #16, #25 & #40
(no grade)

Marvel Comics #1 FN-56

Jack Kirby personal bound set of Captain America issues #1-#10, autographed missing issue #2, w/ four hand drawn originals on inside cover.

Captain America #1 Unrestored FN+73

Sub-Mariner #1 App. VF-76

Red Raven #1 App. FN-57

Human Torch #2 (#1) VG48
Human Torch #2 FN62

Human Torch #3 VF75

Human Torch #5 FN62 & #6 FN+70

Human Torch #38; USA #15;
Captain America #14 and
All Winners #14 (no grade)

Captain America #1 App. FN68

Captain America #2 FN62

Captain America #3 FN64 & #4 FN63

Captain America #5 FN+73,
#6 VG47, #7 FN 63 and #8 GD24

Captain America #11, #15-#19 VG-41

Misce laneous group of Golden Age (18) which include All Se ect #6 NM90 & 1939 New Yorks Worlds Fair GD27

Golden Age group which contains Young Allies #9, Human Torch #7 & #9, All Winners #9, Sub-Mariner #16 and Mystic #10

All Winners #1 FN+71 & #21 FN62

Mystic #3 FN+71
(with group of 6 Golden Age books)

Marvel Comics #5 VG46

Marvel Mystery #7 (no grade)

Marvel Mystery #15, #22, #26, #37, #76, #83 & #85 (no grade)

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Jon Juan... Superlover!

by Jeff Gelb

This column delights in resurrecting long-dead heroes from comic books' Gold and Silver ages, characters long-forgotten but possessing certain charms that made them memorable at one time. Perhaps enough of that charm can be exhumed to spark the interest of today's collectors, especially when the character is as unique and obscure as this month's offering... the one and only Superlover!

Jon Juan #1 appeared from Toby Press with a cover date of Spring 1950. This character is so bizarre that I'm surprised fellow CBM columnist Scott Shaw hasn't given him the "Oddball Comics" treatment. Well, Men of Mystery is proud to throw the spotlight on one of the strangest comic book ideas in the history of the medium. Also, I sincerely believe this to be one of the most under-valued comic books of all. Why? The cover provides some hints...

First, it's created by Superman's own Jerry Siegel. This was the second hero to result from Siegel's falling out with DC, the first being Funnyman, done in collaboration with Joe Shuster. Second, the cover was drawn and signed by Al Reid - one of the pseudonyms of Alex Schomburg... one of the greatest comic book artists of all time! He turned out hundreds of covers for dozens of publishers during World War II... and with the exception of Quality and DC, he worked for almost every publisher of superhero material.

Schomburg's covers dominated the Timely WWII comics and most of their other artists followed his style. But he did much less interior work... and that is precisely why this book so historically important. *Jon Juan* is the only time Schomburg ever drew an entire comic (plus the front cover). And this book is a full 32 pages of art, uninterrupted by ads. One would think that all this would make the comic worth a fortune, but the Guide lists it for a mere $100 in NM! What a bargain!

And that's not all. Not only is the book of interest to Schomburg collectors, it's also a SOTI book! *Jon Juan* is mentioned in the infamous *Seduction of the Innocent*, by its "alarmist" psychiatrist author, Fredric Wertham. During a reference to the then-burgeoning romance comic genre, Wertham remarked, "Just as there were supermen, superwomen, superboys, and super-ducks, so the industry now supplied a 'super-lover'."

That was true enough, but the way in which Wertham suggested that *Jon Juan* is a sexy adult comic is deceptive and inaccurate. Yes, Juan's super power seems to be the ability to make women fall in love with him the instant they set eyes on him. Oh, and he's immortal, too. (I have to give Siegel credit... the immortality concept in particularly is clever, allowing the writer to tackle any historical period and any famous figures from that era.) As for the "super lover" angle, it's good for some laughs and nothing else. It's certainly not a "turn-on" in any way. I imagine this was Siegel's and Toby's idea - to launch a comic that combined the (then-faltering) superhero with the up-and-coming romance genre, tied together with a time-traveling fantasy theme that provided readers with a novel slant and colorful and amusing adventure. In other words, it was a pretty darn good idea on paper.

It was probably Jerry Siegel's world-famous reputation that attracted Schomburg to the project of illustrating this romantic hero. Plus, with WWII's end, the battle covers that he'd been producing were no longer applicable. And the trend was away from superheroes in general, and Schomburg may have been casting a wider net in his work search. Perhaps he was just eager to pay his rent when *Jon Juan* came along. Astonishingly, Jon Gustafson's otherwise-excellent book *Chroma: the Art of Alex Schomburg*, does not mention this comic book. The book does say that in 1951 Schomburg began a long successful stint as cover and interior illustrator for various science fiction and fantasy digests. So, apparently, the Jon Juan project caught Schomburg at the tail-end of his now-legendary association with comic books.

Jon Juan is historically important because it is the only time Schomburg ever drew an entire comic including the cover.

Anyway, let's be honest and say that *Jon Juan* #1 has a lot of goofy charm and offers a lot of laughs... but it by no means captures either Siegel or Schomburg at their creative peak. Siegel's writing was beginning

JON JUAN #1 (Spr 1950)
Using the pseudonym Al Reid, Alex Schomburg drew Jon Juan #1 (Spring 1950) from cover to cover! This was the only time that Schomburg drew an entire comic... 32 pages uninterrupted by ads, plus the cover!

to show the very earliest signs of the campiness that would take over his style in the 1960s, especially when writing for the Mighty Comics Group. And Schomburg simplified his style for the smaller panel illustrations. And the lettering was huge, as if designed for readers with poor eyesight. The cumulative effect was quite strange, although still rather interesting.

This (one and only) issue presents three stories of the "eternal lover" including his origin, in which it is revealed that Juan came from Atlantis. There, when he's pursued by irate locals for chasing their women, he defends himself, saying, "Can I help it if their neglected women cast lovelorn glances in my direction?" They chase him off a cliff, where he falls onto an ice pack that imprisons him - freezing him (like Captain America) for centuries. When free of the ice, it turns out that it contained "a rare sea weed with strange chemical properties that worked a miracle upon Juan's atomic structure," rendering him immortal.

©Tobby Press

To call *Jon Juan* a sales flop is being kind. Even *Funnyman* lasted six issues! Why did *Jon Juan* fail? I suspect that low distribution in a very crowded marketplace must have had something to do with it. As for content, I can only speculate on what the average Superman fan must have thought when checking *Jon Juan* #1 at the local newsstand. Boys must have thought it too mushy, and girls probably thought it silly compared to the genuinely adult romance comics being done by Simon and Kirby (and others) at the time.

Still, Jon Juan is a rare, if flawed, gem... and a classic Man of Mystery. Super-lover deserves his immortality, at least in the hearts of discerning comic book collectors! ■

Jeff Gelb is a freelance writer and editor. His first novel, Spectors, *was published in 1988. He has edited two anthologies of horror fiction for Pocket Books,* Shock Rock *and* Shock Rock II, *both with rock and roll themes. His long-time association with the* Radio and Records *weekly newspaper has no doubt added some depth to his knowledge of the music field. He is currently co-editing anthologies of erotic horror, including the* Hot Blood *series.*

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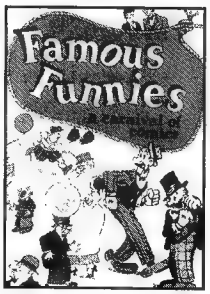
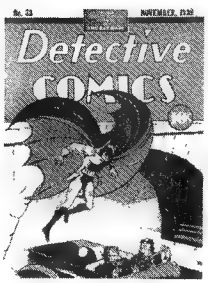


The 2nd Comic Book



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• 148 pages • Photo illustrated • Shipped 1st class for only $3 per issue! (Foreign - $4 per issue)

The Ultimate Spider-Man Saga?

Everything I ever needed to know about life, I learned from comics.

BY KENT MARTIN

Go figure that guy Peter Parker, would you? Able to face down and beat a horde of super-villains, carry a full load of classes, and still look after his beloved Aunt May (no matter how "uncool" it may have seemed at the time). No "generation gap" ever existed between these two.

Although the "Generation Gap" was a phrase popularized in the 1960s, the concept has been around a lot longer (centuries, to be exact). But the so-called "gap" is the widest in your pre-teen and teen years when your parents' generation seems so totally out-of-touch. Yet, when you're growing up, you desperately need the guiding hand of a mother and/or a father to show you right and wrong and how to tell the difference.

Aunt May was essentially Peter Parker's mother and father figure most of his life. She gave him love and support when no one else was around. And Peter loved her and protected her the best way he knew, even if it meant keeping the secret of his superhero identity hidden from her all those years (although *Amazing Spider-Man* #400 now tells us that she knew all along). Their bond was quite unique in the comics of the time. And it gave many of us who followed his adventures the idea that maybe it's not so bad to love and respect your elders.

No Spider-Man saga showed this love and devotion better than the classic series that unfolded in *Amazing Spider-Man* #31-33, my own personal favorite storyline from the Silver Age. Here again, Stan Lee and Steve Ditko combined their considerable resources to tell a story of sacrifice and selflessness played out alongside one of Spider-Man's greatest battles with Dr. Octopus.

It's also notable for the fact that it's the story in which Parker begins his college career and meets Gwen Stacy (although he's so consumed with worry over Aunt May's latest illness that he barely notices Gwen... at least this time around).

It seems Aunt May's illness is traced to a radioactive particle in her bloodstream which Parker assumes came from his blood during a life-saving transfusion the year before. Enlisting the aid of Dr. Connors (no longer the Lizard, at least for the moment), Spider-Man learns of a serum that may save Aunt May's life. Unfortunately (but obviously so, because there wouldn't be much of a story otherwise), Dr. Octopus needs the very same serum for his research... and the battles begins between Spider-Man and Dr. Octopus over a tiny bottle of serum that might save Aunt May's life.

Complex, yes... but brilliantly simple at the same time. This particular storyline demonstrates why Spider-Man has appealed to millions of readers since he was first bitten by that radioactive spider: He's super, yet he's so very, very human... with a very strong set of principles.

I don't remember how many times I read this three-book saga over and over again. Stan Lee's powerful scripting combined with Steve Ditko's cinematic artwork built to a stunning climax in issue #33 when Spider-Man virtually defied all odds to bring the serum to Aunt May and save her life. I read and re-read the story for so many reasons. It took me to a world where good and evil were clearly defined, where even a super-hero struggles in school and where it's okay to love your parent.

It was... and remains... my all-time favorite story. But it also provided a kid growing up with some words to think about when the proverbial going got tough. Spider-Man's own words from the climactic battle scene in *ASM* #33 said it all: "Anyone can win a fight... when the odds... are easy! It's when the going's tough... when there seems to be no chance... THAT'S when... it counts!"

THE TWO PEOPLE IN ALL THE WORLD WHO'VE BEEN KINDEST TO ME! I CAN'T FAIL AGAIN! IT CAN'T HAPPEN A SECOND TIME! I WON'T LET IT-- I WON'T!
NO MATTER WHAT THE ODDS-- NO MATTER WHAT THE COST-- I'LL GET THAT SERUM TO AUNT MAY, AND MAYBE THEN I'LL NO LONGER BE HAUNTED BY THE MEMORY-- OF UNCLE BEN!
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REMINISCENT OF SHAKESPEARE... Peter Parker in the guise of Spider-Man takes a personal oath to save Aunt May's life... and ameliorate his guilt about Uncle Ben's death.

I remembered those words during some of my toughest times in school, in class and in the gym, when brains and/or

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brawn made the difference. A winner never quits. It also helped me to appreciate Mom and Dad a little better.

So go figure that guy Peter Parker, would you? Able to face down and beat a horde of super-villains, carry a full load of classes, and still look after his beloved Aunt May (no matter how "uncool" it may have seemed at the time).

That's called courage, character, hard work, and a respect for your elders… and I learned it in comics! ■

Kent Martin is a writer who lives with his family in St. Louis. He credits his love of comics to his older brothers, whose issues of Tarzan *and* Uncle Scrooge *he read while growing up in Kansas City. The Silver Age of DC, Marvel, Gold Key, Charlton and others captured his attention in the 1960s and has remained his favorite age of comics ever since*

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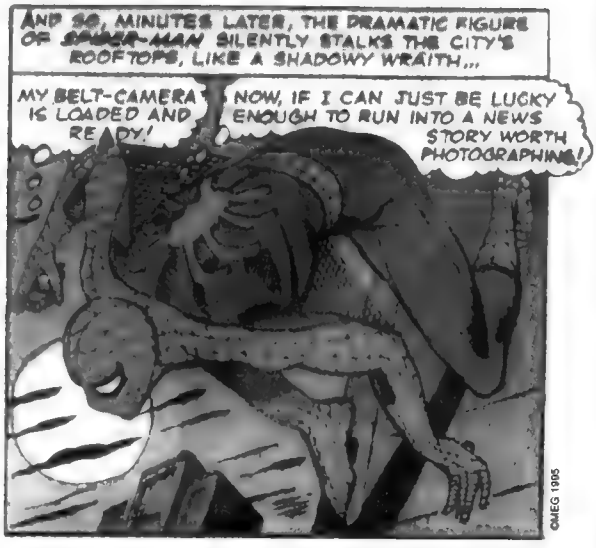
AM. SPIDER-MAN #33 (Feb 1966) Considered by many to be the best of the Ditko covers.

AM. SPIDER-MAN #32 (Jan 1966) The inset of Aunt May is the first time she appears on a cover.

AM. SPIDER-MAN #31 (Dec 1965) "If This Be My Destiny" with its famous stylistic and symbolic spider cover.


AND SO, MINUTES LATER, THE DRAMATIC FIGURE OF SPIDER-MAN SILENTLY STALKS THE CITY'S ROOFTOPS, LIKE A SHADOWY WRAITH...
MY BELT-CAMERA IS LOADED AND READY!
NOW, IF I CAN JUST BE LUCKY ENOUGH TO RUN INTO A NEWS STORY WORTH PHOTOGRAPHING!

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DITKO PANEL WITH CLASSIC POSE & DIALOGUE
"…Spider-Man silently stalks the city's roof tops, like a shadowy wraith…"

Rarity & Demand of ASM #1-50

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DEMAND IN ANY GRADE		DEMAND IN VF OR BETTER		HARD TO FIND IN ANY GRADE		HARD TO FIND IN VF OR BETTER	
Rank	Iss.	Rank	Iss.	Rank	Iss.	Rank	Iss.
1	14	1	1	1	2	1	2
2	2	2	2	2	4	2	4
3	3	3	6	3	3	3	6
4	4	4	14	4	6	4	1
5	6	5	3	5	7	5	3
6	50	6	4	6	5	6	5
7	1	7	28	7	13	7	28
8	40	8	16	8	10	8	13
9	5	9	50	9	11	9	7
10	15	10	5	10	12	10	8
11	9	11	40	11	8	11	11
12	17	12	7	12	9	12	9
13	8	13	17	13	15	13	15
14	7	14	15	14	1	14	16
15	16	15	9	15	16	15	12
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44	43	44	49	44	42	44	43
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46	48	46	48	46	44	46	45
47	49	47	44	47	45	47	47
48	45	48	45	48	47	48	46
49	46	49	46	49	48	49	48
50	47	50	47	50	49	50	49

BY GARY M. CARTER

Determining and then comparing the rarity and the demand of any run of comics is fraught with hazards and pitfalls. In the case of this admittedly unscientific and subjective survey, I attempted to minimize these by using as geographically diverse a sample group as possible (with years and years of cumulative knowledge and experience)... plus the use of averages.

There were some surprising and some predictable rankings. Amazing Spider-Man (ASM) #2 was ranked the hardest-to-find in VF or better while issue #1 was ranked the highest in demand in VF or better.

ASM #14 was ranked most in demand in any grade and #2 was ranked hardest to find in any grade. (See ranking charts at left.)

Personally, I find subjective ranking surveys of this kind to be of the most value when I compare the demand score with the rarity (difficult-to-find) score. When these scores vary greatly, I look for the possiblity of an under-valued or over-vaued issue.

As an example, look at the demand-in-any-grade rank of issue #2 compared to its hard-to-find-in-any-grade rank. The difference between the two is only one point, which means that market demand and perceived rarity are in sink.

Compare this to issue #14. Its demand-in-any-grade rank of 1 is way out of sink with its hard-to-find-in-any-grade rank of 24! This suggests the possibility that although the issue is in high demand in any grade, it is readily available and not at all scarce.

Using this same approach utilizing the data on the four column charts at left, allows one to compare rarity to demand for any of the first 50 issues of Amazing Spider-Man.

A few final thoughts that may provide some additional insights into ASM 1-50. Several dealers and collectors felt that ASM #16 is under valued in high grade and mid grade; #23 is under appreciated; #28 in high grade is under valued; #14 may now be priced beyond the budget of many collectors, hence there is some reduced demand; #6 (first Lizard) is hard to find in grade because of a "built in dinginess" on the gray cover which readily shows defects; #2 is generally tough to find plus its black and red cover shows defects easily; #3 and #5 seem readily available, especially #5; #41 (first Rhino) with its white cover is one of the more difficult high number issues to find and is probably under-valued; and it is possible that no issues in low to mid grade are hard to find at all... since a number of the larger dealers purportedly have them five deep!

I'm always interested in hearing what you think. Write and let our readers know your opinion on the relative rarity and demand of Amazing Spider-Man 1-50!

Thanks to the following collectors and dealers from around the country who contributed their time and expertise to our latest CBM survey: David T. Alexander, Florida; Jon Berk, Connecticut; Pat S. Calhoun, Comic Finders, California; John Chrusinski, Tropic Comics, Florida; Tim Collins, RTS Ltd, Colorado; Gary Dolgoff, Gary Dolgoff Comics, New York; Joe Dungan, Now and Then Collectibles, Texas; Bruce Edwards, Quasar Comics, Kentucky; Richard Evans, Bedrock City Comics, Texas; Steve Fishler, Metropolis Comics, New York; Michael Goldman, Motor City Comics, Michigan; Dan Greenhalgh, Showcase New England, Connecticut; Jef Hinds, Wisconsin; Phil Levine, Phil M. Levine & Sons, New Jersey; Richard Munchin, Tomorrow's Treasures, New York; Jim Payette, Rare Books and Things, New Hampshire; Bill Ponseti, More Fun Comics, Louisiana; Robert Rogovin, Four Color Comics, New York; Rob Ronin, California; Marnin Rosenberg, New York; Robert Roter, Pacific Comics Exchange, California; Martin Rothstein, Wall to Wall Comics, California; John Snyder, Diamond International Galleries, Maryland; Mark Wilson, World's Finest, Washington; and Harley Yee, Michigan.

Incredible

John Romita, Sr.,

John Romita, Senior's career in comics spans more than four decades. While comic book fans the world over identify the senior Romita with his stint on Spider-Man, or as Art Director of Marvel Comics, or even as the father of current fan favorite John Romita, Junior, few in the comic book world know that one of Spider-Man's most distinguished pencillers almost gave up the drawing board in the late 'fifties for the job of Editor of DC's romance line.

FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-ARTIST John Romita Sr. in a recent photo.

Breaking Into the Biz

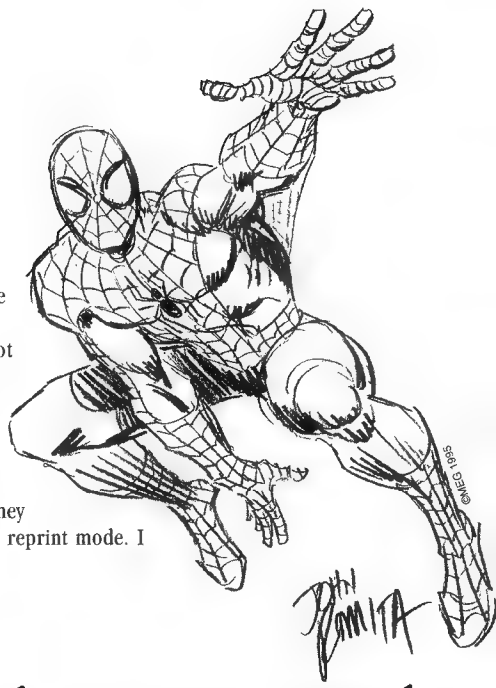
Romita's career in illustration began in 1949 when he sold his first romance story to *Famous Funnies*. The story never saw print and Romita describes the editor in charge as a "philanthropist" who would buy artwork from young artists, knowing that it might never see print.

Romita describes the transition from art for personal satisfaction to art as a professional. "I used to draw like everybody else and would draw my own comic strips, and everything came naturally. You always draw what you know. The first time you go for a professional assignment, and you're drawing something you don't know, that's when you realize, 'Oh my God! This is hard! It's not what I wanted to do.' That's the first cold bath that a young artist takes, because he thinks he's pretty good. His family tells him he's good. He just goes along swimmingly, drawing horses, and cowboys, airplanes, and whatever he likes, and then he has to draw a woman, and a baby, and he gets paralyzed."

Romita overcame his "artistic paralysis" and began ghosting stories for a young artist he knew from school in 1949. Romita "ghost" penciled the stories and his artist friend inked them. He was working for Stan Lee, without Lee ever knowing it. "My first published story, I think, was a crime-story. My buddy was a fairly good inker and he could get work. He had all the contacts. I had no contacts and I had no confidence."

John Romita was not destined to remain a "ghost" as he describes his first work directly for Stan Lee. "It was a science fiction thing about an alien baby that kills its parents. I penciled and inked it. I went in and told them that I had been working for Stan for six months, but he doesn't know me. The secretary came out with a script."

Romita went on to work with Stan in the 'fifties. Says Romita, "I was there for seven years with Stan, doing Westerns. I even did the Captain America stint in the middle 'fifties. I was taking it emotionally, right from



Ink-slinger

Silver-Age Legend... by Andy Lee

Kirby's work. Stan liked my stuff immediately." In 1958, and after seven steady years, the work dried up. The Atlas "implosion" (as comic historians call it) forced Stan Lee to cut back ninety percent of the company's line. Romita, along with so many others, would have to look for work elsewhere.

Romita would soon find work at the "Distinguished" Competition who was presently enjoying a Silver Age hey-day. Romita explains, "So I went over to DC in '58. At DC I just did love stories for eight years. It was almost like a living death. It is the most boring stuff and the challenge (at first) was to make it look exciting even though nothing is happening. Nothing ever happened in those books - just a lot of soulful looks, a lot of tears. So, I took some pride in jazzing them up to the point where I became their main artist in the Romance department. I even got offered the job of Romance Editor. It's funny, when we talked about it, I didn't really want it, but I was afraid to turn it down, thinking this might be a great future. While we were talking about it, it suddenly occurred to me, if I was the one doing most of the artwork, if I took this job I'd be losing my best artist! (laughter)

The Kiss of Death

While DC was making its mark in the revitalization of super-heroes, Romita was not a part of it. Says the ex-Romance Artist, "Carmine (Infantino) had revitalized the Flash and then he was revitalizing Batman a couple of years later. It's funny, I never was allowed in the adventures division at DC. There was some kind of a wall, some kind of a glass wall, and I couldn't move from one department to another. Somebody was keeping me in that Romance department. I was okay for a love story, but nobody wanted to try me for anything else."

But, things were not going well for the romance comic book genre, as Romita relates, "In '65, the Romance department was all glutted up and they were going to go into a reprint mode. I went around to DC and tried to find some editors. It happened to be July and everybody was on vacation. But, most of the guys just ignored me and avoided me. So I hadn't made a lot of friends up there. I was just one of those guys who would come in, drop his work off and go home. Then after that I went to Stan and a couple of weeks later I had gotten Daredevil. Then I got this call from George Kashdan and a couple of editors at DC asking me if I wanted to do one of their super-hero features. They offered me Metamorpho. I

"So I went over to DC in '58. I just did love stories for eight years. It was almost like a living death."

DC said, 'Is it possible that these covers with crazy, explosive captions and shouting copy were selling?"

told them that I had already made a handshake deal with Stan and I didn't want to renege on that. Ironically, my first chance at a DC adventure book came after I left!"

At the same time, DC was concerned about Stan Lee's comic books. "People up at DC used to grumble, 'What the hell is going on with Stan Lee? He's still doing the same crap. Why is it selling?' Because at DC we always had the impression that Stan's stuff was scratchy, and dirty, and ugly and that we were doing a 'clean, quality line'... and DC was the 'Cadillac' of the industry... and Stan Lee was this upstart noisemaker.

"DC used to have very dignified, quiet covers and somebody at DC even said, 'Is it possible that these covers with crazy, explosive captions and balloons with bursts of shouting copy are selling books?' Stan did these splashy covers. They had no idea why Stan was selling books and DC sales were slipping."

The Artist Without Fear

Romita's return to Marvel signaled the end of his romance career. John R., Senior was to pick up the

Unseen Silver: John Romita's first pencil and ink work done for Stan Lee

SUPPER READY, HONEY?
NO, IT ISN'T! THE BABY'S BEEN CRYING AND RESTLESS ALL DAY! MAYBE HE'S ILL! I DON'T KNOW. I'M ONLY ONE PERSON. I CAN'T TAKE CARE OF HIM AND COOK, AND...
NOW, NOW, DARLING, DON'T CRY. DR. MARBANK SAID THE BABY WAS PERFECTLY WEALTHY. IT'S YOU I'M WORRIED ABOUT. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS A DOCTOR!
I...I'M SORRY, BILL. I'LL BE ALL RIGHT. IF I COULD ONLY GET ONE NIGHT'S REST!
I WONDER WHAT THAT CAN BE. MAYBE RATS GOT IN TO THE KITCHEN! I'D BETTER CHECK... THEY COULD GET AT THE BABY!
JENNY... IS THAT YOU? MMMM, GUESS NOT... EYES PLAYING TRICKS ON ME!
NO NOISE... NOTHING HERE NOW. THE COFFEE POT'S BEEN MOVED... THE LID LEFT UP! THAT'S FUNNY!
NOW, YOU TAKE GOOD CARE OF THAT LITTLE MITE! IT'S NOT EVERY YOUNG COUPLE WHO IS LUCKY ENOUGH TO ADOPT SUCH A GRAND LITTLE BOY!
HE'LL HAVE THE BEST, MRS DIAMON ...AND THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE!
ISN'T HE THE SWEETEST THING, BILL?
HE'S WHAT WE NEEDED TO MAKE OUR HOUSE A HOME AND OUR LOVE COMPLETE! IT'S GOING TO BE WONDERFUL!
SOME KIND OF POWDER ON TOP! JUST DISSOLVING INTO COFFEE!
ANT POWDER POISON. THAT'S WHAT'S IN THE COFFEE! WHO COULD'VE DONE IT? ONLY...ONLY JENNY! BUT WHY? WHY?

reins of Daredevil, the Man without Fear. "My first Daredevil was number twelve. Number twelve and thirteen were broken down by Jack Kirby. I did the cover to twelve, I think Kirby did thirteen. It was a dungeon cover. I inked Kirby on that one… the issue is one of my great memories."

"Daredevil sixteen had the trial balloon on Spider-Man. Although he didn't tell me until later, Stan was kind of testing me to see whether or not I could do Spider-Man. In fact, I thought he was using one of his star characters in Daredevil to hype the sales of the title. Turns out it was really just to see if I could handle Spider-Man."

Romita would soon take over the artistic reins on Spider-Man. While many in fandom closely identify Romita's career with the wall crawler, Romita tells a different story about his beginnings on the book. "I didn't think I was on it permanently. Stan had asked me, 'Would you mind doing Spider-Man for a while?' I took that literally. I thought that Ditko would go away, relax, and then come back and want it back again and I'd get back on Daredevil. So, I never thought… I

I was ghosting Spider-Man to such a degree that I never really felt at home on that strip for years.

during the early days of Atlas Comics (Fall of 1951)…

SHE'S SICK, SICKER THAN I THOUGHT. THAT'S WHAT IT MUST BE! I'LL HAVE TO WATCH HER EVERY MINUTE! I'LL SEE DR. MARBANE TOMORROW... EXPLAIN WHAT'S HAPPENED!
SMOKE! I SMELL SMOKE! THE HOUSE... IT'S ON FIRE!
JENNY! JENNY!
THE HOUSE IS ON FIRE! BILL, THERE'S SMOKE ALL OVER!
THE FUNERAL WAS OVER, AND BILL RETURNED TO HIS HOUSE! HIS MIND FILLED WITH STRANGE INSANE THOUGHTS!
WHO PUT THE TEDDY BEAR AT THE HEAD OF THE STAIRS? SOMETHING STRANGE HAS BEEN HAPPENING IN THE HOUSE...IT COULDN'T BE JENNY! MAYBE I'M INSANE, AND BEEN TRYING TO KILL THEM BOTH. BLAMING IT ON THEM TO GET RID OF MY OWN GUILT COMPLEX!
THE BABY'S ASLEEP MR. CARTER! I'LL LEAVE NOW!
WHAT'S THAT NOISE? SOMEBODY'S IN THE LIBRARY. MY GUN'S IN THERE...IN THE DESK DRAWER!
THE BABY! HOW DID HE GET DOWN HERE? HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE ASLEEP! HOW DID HE GET THE DRAWER OPEN... GET THE GUN? COULD HE HAVE? ...NO, NO, THAT'S INSANE. I MUST BE GOING OUT OF MY MIND!
BILL GOT HIS WIFE OUTSIDE, AND WAS ABOUT TO RE-ENTER THE HOUSE FOR THE BABY, WHEN...
BILL! DON'T GO BACK IN THE BABY'S SAFE...HERE HE IS ON THE LAWN!
SAFE!? ...BUT, BUT HOW DID HE GET OUT HERE? WHEN DID HE GET OUT HERE?
I, I DON'T UNDERSTAND! MAYBE IT'S NOT JENNY WHO'S MENTALLY ILL. MAYBE IT'S ME! THE THOUGHTS IN MY MIND...THAT THE BABY SET THIS FIRE, AND GOT OUT, THAT HE PUT THE POISON IN THE COFFEE...IT'S INSANE! I'D BETTER WATCH MYSELF!
THE BABY LOOKED UP AT BILL, AND BILL SAW IT. THE STRANGE DIABOLICAL LOOK IN THE BABY'S EYES...THE FIENDISH TWIST TO THE SMILE ON THE BABY'S SOFT LIPS! THEN, THE CROWNING HORROR OF ALL, THE BABY SPOKE!
YOU...YOU'RE NOT A BABY AT ALL! YOU'RE...
I'M A BEING FROM ANOTHER WORLD, INHABITING THE BODY OF THIS EARTHLING CHILD! I'VE KILLED YOUR WIFE, AND I SHALL KILL YOU, WITH THIS GUN! IT WILL LOOK LIKE SUICIDE BECAUSE OF YOUR WIFE'S DEATH!
THIS IS MAD...A NIGHTMARE! THIS CAN'T BE TRUE!
IT IS TRUE! BUT ONLY YOU AND I WILL KNOW THAT IT IS! NO ONE WILL SUSPECT YOUR DEATH OCCURRED ANY OTHER WAY FOR YOU AND I ARE ALONE...AND WHO WOULD SUSPECT AN INNOCENT LITTLE BABY OF... MURDER?
THE FIRE WAS PUT OUT, AND THE CARTERS RETURNED TO THEIR HOUSE! BILL FELL INTO A FITFUL SLEEP. THEN, WAS AWAKENED IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS BY A TERRIBLE SCREAM!
JENNY! JENNY!
E-E-E-E-E-E-E-K-K-K!
JENNY! SHE FELL DOWN THE STAIRS...TRIPPED OVER THE BABY'S TEDDY BEAR! HER HEAD IT'S TWISTED... SHE'S... DEAD!
THEY FOUND CARTER'S BODY LATER THAT DAY, THE GUN CLUTCHED IN HIS HAND!
IT'S OPEN AND SHUT! SUICIDE, DUE TO DESPONDENCY OVER THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE! POOR FELLOW!
POOR LITTLE BABY, LEFT ALL ALONE! MAYBE THEY'LL LET ME ADOPT HIM! YOU WOULDN'T MIND, WOULD YOU, JIM?
'COURSE NOT MARTHA! HE'S A CUTE LITTLE TYKE!
THE END

The Ditkos and the Kirbys of the world are to be admired because they create their own worlds.

never dreamed I'd be on it for six or seven years... then do four more years on the newspaper strip. So the whole thing was a shock to me because I never really felt at home on that strip. I always felt like it was Ditko's book. Youngsters used to come to me at conventions and say, 'When is Ditko coming back?' It seemed they never much cared about my feelings. They used to say, 'When is Ditko coming back? You don't do enough shadows on Spider-Man!' Ross Andru went through the same thing when he took over for me. Ross Andru said, 'I'm getting tired of people asking me, "'When's Romita coming back?"' I said, 'Good! I took three years of that when I took over!' (laughter)

Ditko is in the Details

Romita describes taking over the Spider-Man book: "It's funny... I can't describe to you what a different mind-set there was. The traditional comic artist in those days was constantly geared to becoming a ghost. If you weren't blessed with a new character that you created, you generally would take over someone else's character. In those days I felt (and I'm sure a lot of people in the business felt the same way) an obligation to ghost exactly the way it had been." Romita continues, "Frankly, I ghosted Spider-Man as closely to Ditko's style as I could for a long time... just swiping cold from Ditko. But I never worked in a thin penline or did nine-panel pages. I figured if this book had been established for three years that the readers didn't want to see double-page spreads, full-page spreads, two panels on a page, or three panels on a page like I was doing on Daredevil. I was ghosting Spider-Man to such a degree that I never really felt at home on that strip for years. It took two or three years before I started to feel at home. It was bizarre."

While John Romita succeeded in putting his own mark on Spider-Man, he speculates as to why Ditko left the book, "It was political or at least social. Me - I had no political opinions to speak of, I had no ax to grind. In contrast, Ditko was apparently a very strong advocate of somewhat conservative thinking, and I admired him for it. Stan, on the other hand, was like me... sort of apolitical and somewhat of a liberal. I think whenever the liberal part of him came out that it clashed with Ditko's sensibilities. I suspect that Ditko wanted to plot the stories because he didn't agree with Stan's story concepts. They bumped heads when Ditko would plot a story with a certain philosophy and Stan would change it when he wrote

the script. For instance the 'Crisis on Campus' stories. There were college campus demonstrations by these guys who were crazy anarchists who were trying to bring down the establishment. Ditko's approach made these guys rabble that deserved to be slapped down by the police. Stan would write the story in a way that gave them a little bit of credence and sympathy. I don't think Ditko liked it. This is strictly an opinion on my part...Steve Ditko is a very creative guy, and it kills me that he left Marvel."

Becoming a Merry Marvel Marcher

Romita describes his first encounter with Spider-Man, "I was just vaguely aware of Spider-Man. I was not buying a lot of books, and I didn't really know anything about Spider-Man until I went over to Marvel in '65. When I got the books, my first impression was, 'Gee, it looks very crude.' By the time I got to the issues Ditko was working on in '65 and '66 then I realized, 'Wow, this really looks good.' He had polished up the stuff and there was so much great work. I'm referring to the great sequence in '65 with Spider-Man trapped under the debris. It's a landmark and is one of the issues that will impress me forever. When they first started out the issues were done so simply... everybody was done so small... small figures and a lot of nine-panel and twelve panel pages. I didn't think much of it, and I was amazed that it was the number two selling book. I went through all of those books as reference when Stan gave them to me to prepare. I had a lot of respect for it. It was successful right from the beginning."

Romita goes on to say of his contemporaries, "Steve's stuff was very distinct. I will tell you one thing, the Ditkos and the Kirbys of the world are to be admired because they create their own world. They're not trying to do the real world on paper like I do. They created their own images... even their own buildings. Their buildings are theirs, their clothing is theirs, their cars are theirs. It's their world. Everything is valid in their world... and I always envied the guys who did that and created their own universe to work in."

Spinning Yarns and Spinning Webs

A run of stories as long as Romita produced on Spider-Man is full of some memorable successes. Romita reminisces, "I think one of my favorite storylines was that Vietnam storyline with Flash Thompson. He was in Vietnam, and when he came back he was being threatened... somebody was trying to get him from Vietnam. I used that story as a tribute

LISTEN! THERE'S NOT A SECOND TO LOSE! YOU'VE GOT TO LEAVE-- ALL OF YOU!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE! I'VE GOTTA GET THRU TO YOU! YOU'LL ALL BE KILLED!
EVERY MAN MUST DIE MY SON
©MIG 1995

to Milton Caniff. I used a big Oriental chauffeur that I based on Big Stoop from *Terry and the Pirates*. I enjoyed that whole storyline. It was sort of my plot. Stan just sort of went along with it." Romita continues, "Gerry Conway did some nice writing. I was very touched by Spider-Man's reaction to Gwen's death. It really touched me how he wrote it. For a guy who is working on the plot with the writer to be impressed by the plot is amazing. You're supposed to be a pro and not terribly impressed by the stuff. But Gerry did impress me. He did some nice writing on that series."

Even as Romita reminisces about his successes in the strip he does have regrets, particularly about the Wedding of Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson, a story drawn by Paul Ryan. Romita explains, "One of the biggest regrets I have is that I didn't make time to do this story. If I should have done anything in the last ten years I should have done this. I really regret that I didn't do it. I should have taken a month off. I was working at the office doing all sorts of emergency stuff."

While some would think that being at the artistic helm of Marvel's flagship character would be satisfying enough for an artist, Romita admits, "I always thought I would like to explore doing Sub-Mariner on a regular basis. Daredevil is really the one I regret leaving. I wish I had stayed on Daredevil for years. I

A TRIBUTE TO "TERRY"
Spiderman's Vietnam saga was designed as a salute to art influence Milton Caniff (above)

CLASH OF THE TITANS
Spidey and Green Goblin take pot-shots at each other over NYC (opposite)

Noel Sickles was such an influence. He changed Alex Toth's approach, and in turn Toth changed everyone else's.

really liked those characters."

Romita had more of a sense of ownership of the character of Daredevil as he describes, "Daredevil had maybe three artists in a year and, if Daredevil was anybody's, it was Wally Wood's because he changed

the costume. I would have just intensified the human elements on Daredevil more. What I dreamed of was making Daredevil the top-selling book at Marvel. I liked the fact that it was a little Batman-esque only with prettier people. To this day, I still think that Daredevil is the most sensational character we have, and I don't know why he hasn't grown in popularity more than he has.

"Although, when my son did it, I think it was really glistening. I did get a kick out of him doing Daredevil.

Marvel has lost touch with some of the basics, and to get that back again is not going to be easy.

He and Anne Nocenti, for a couple of years, did the best comics that we were putting out. I loved that sequence. He gave Daredevil such a gritty, real life feel, you know? It was really a tremendous character. The Man Without Fear series is the best stuff that's been done in years in comics. It's a wonderful, wonderful book. Between Frank Miller and my son, they did some wonderful things."

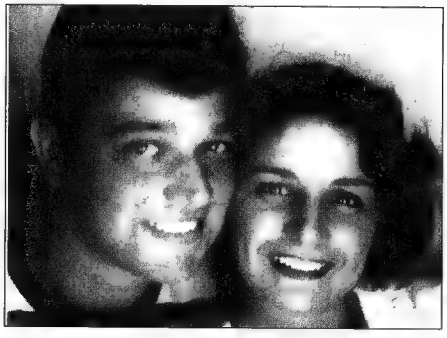
Romita speculates what he might have done with Namor: "I think what I would have done is to make Namor less remote, not to humanize him more. I think the fact that he is so angry was good, but I think the rest of the characters and the rest of the supporting cast and their relationships is important too! I thought Sub-Mariner was just as great a character as Daredevil and the Human Torch. They're are landmark characters. For me, Captain America was never up to their level. They devised him in wartime for a reason, but the rest of the characters were "eternal" in their appeal. I thought that Sub-Mariner, Human Torch and later on Daredevil were just stand-out characters. They had so much humanity in them. I think the Daredevil premise is just sensational."

Ink, Sweat, and Tears

Looking back on his career, John Romita cites his artistic influences as Hal Foster's *Tarzan*, Alex Raymond, and Milton Caniff. Romita cites another artistic influence: "Noel Sickles was a comic artist for a short period of time. He did a strip called *Scorchy Smith*. Alex Toth, at the time, was collecting and making copies of everything that Noel Sickles had done... and then people were making copies of Alex Toth's collection. When I got into the business everybody said, 'The first thing you've got to do is get a set of those *Scorchy Smiths* from Noel Sickles.' Almost everybody in the business had this stack of photostats of, God knows, two years of *Scorchy Smith* Dailies. Nostalgia has reproduced them. You'd be surprised what an influence Noel Sickles was. He changed Alex Toth's approach and in turn, Alex Toth changed everyone else's approach.

Noel Sickles work had great composition and great tricks of black and white patterns. He used to do these zippotone things, but he did them so cleverly that they were not annoying. He really was a genius. He only stayed in comics maybe three years. He and Milton Caniff used to share a studio. Caniff would help him out on Scorchy Smith and he would help Caniff out on Terry and the Pirates. In fact, probably Caniff was influenced by Sickles, and it changed his style. He was a very liney, cartoony artist before Noel Sickles. I think we all stem basically from Hal Foster, who influenced Noel Sickles, and Noel Sickles influenced everyone else through Caniff. It's a clear line. You can see that

FAMILY MATTERS John R., Sr. and wife , (bottom left) begat young Jr. (bottom right), who in turn grew up into a top talent in his own right. John Jr. & John Sr. as they appear today. (opposite top)



everyone in the business in the "fifties was influenced by Noel Sickles and Alex Toth."

Make Mine Marvel—Again

As Executive Art Director of Marvel Comics, Romita looks to the future and the prospects of Marvel's "Marvelution". "They have said that they're going to bring back some of the human elements that made Marvel what it is. It doesn't matter how spectacular the thing is, if you lose the human interest, you lose it all. Nobody is going to care what happens to you if everybody is ultra-powerful and everybody is mercurial in their demeanor. You don't care about people. You don't root for them. You need to have somebody to root for and somebody to root against. This 'graying' down of villains where the top villain is now a human being and he's now your uncle, he's your grandfather, and in the future he's your grandson.

"What happens is that there's nobody to hate and there's nobody to love anymore. It's simplistic and let me tell you, I fully understand that, if it could not have continued the way it was from the 'seventies and the 'eighties, it had to go through a change. I admire the guys who have made these changes, because they have made a very good business out of this. But what happened is we lost touch with some of the basics, and to get that back again is not going to be easy. Indeed, the big problem is, do the readers want it? Are the readers interested in good stories? They keep saying they are. My fear is that maybe that audience (for good story-telling and characterization) is gone."

John Romita, Senior and John Romita, Junior hope to one day work on a project together. Says Romita, "We've been intending to do it for a long time. Stan Lee is supposed to write a story, and John Junior is supposed to pencil it, and I'm supposed to ink it."

Passing the Torch

Romita describes the years when the boys were growing up with a famous dad: "Actually, a lot of the kids in the neighborhood used to come to the house. They used to do that with Jack Kirby, who lived about fifteen minutes away. They used to go to his house and ring the doorbell and Jack would welcome them in. It was a little harder for me, because I was usually so late, I was usually working. I didn't have the time and the energy to be graceful and generous. Jack was always generous. Len Wein and Marv Wolfman used to go to his door and just spend the day unannounced. They'd spend the day in his house and obviously Roz

was generous with her time, too. They used to come to my house. Some of them were in the neighborhood, some were John's friends. Alex Saviuk grew up with my kids. Tom DeFalco came to my house as a kid."

The interview forum gives Romita the chance to send a message back to the fans, as Romita says, "I'm always pleased that a lot of the readers, today's readers, find my stuff worthy of talking about and discussing. I always get the feeling that it will be passed by and all the new stuff will sort of push it aside. Whenever I hear anybody talking about it, I'm very pleased. I'm always amazed that young people are even familiar with my stuff. I'm glad that people are paying attention and are recalling it, because it makes me feel good. It makes me feel like I didn't miss all that sleep and fun time in vain, it was worth it." ■

Are readers still interested in good stories and characterization? My fear is that audience is gone.

Andy Lee is a Boston based freelance writer and electrical engineer by day. He has been a comic book collector for nearly 25 years. He owes his writting "career" to three people: Gary M. Carter who gave him his first break, his girlfriend Terry who puts up with all the time he spends on writing, and a close friend who once challenged him withe the question, "do you want to write or do you want to just be a writer?" he has been writing ever since.

LIKE FATHER

Batman and the Joker... Captain Marvel and Savana... Superman and Lex Luthor... Fantastic Four and Dr. Doom. Some villains are a part of their heroes lives, bound together at some fundamental level - often more alike than either would care to admit. So it is with Spider-Man and the Green Goblin. Yet the Goblin is among the more complex of these comic book antagonists, both in terms of his fascinating history and his turbulent evolution. A look at Marvel's verdant villain provides an important piece of the ongoing webslinger mythos and is an essential chapter of study in any "Spider-Man 101" class.

©MEG 1995

As any Spider-Man collector will tell you, the original Green Goblin made his first appearance in *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 (July 1964), and quickly became a fan favorite. The Goblin remained a mystery until this first Romita issue, *Amazing Spider-Man* #39 (August, 1966). In that classic, GG's identity was revealed to be Norman Osborn, the father of one of Peter's classmates. Then in *Amazing Spider-Man* #122 the first Green Goblin dies.

But the focus here is the second Green Goblin, Harry Osborn, Norman's son. To fully appreciate the second Green Goblin, one has to realize that Harry Osborn and Peter Parker were the very best of friends. Peter moved into Harry's apartment shortly after graduating from high school, and they were roommates for years. While Peter was involved with Gwen Stacy, Harry O. dated the future Mrs. Parker... Mary Jane Watson. (In fact the four of them all went out on their first double date way back in *Amazing Spider-Man* #47 (April, 1967).) These four people genuinely cared about one another, and their relationship makes the plot all that much more interesting.

LIKE SON

The story of the Green Goblin II

BY TONY STARKS

The following list of issues are "milestones" of a sort in the saga of Green Goblin II. And don't' forget...there'll be a pop quiz at the end of the period, so don't forget to take notes!

Amazing Spider-Man #121 (June, 1973)
Lives are forever changed because of Harry's use of LSD (his drug abuse problems started back in *ASM* #96-#98). It causes Harry to have a complete mental breakdown. His son's mental illness triggers Norman Osborn's own psychosis, and the Green Goblin resurfaces. Green Goblin kidnaps Gwen Stacy, and in a despicable act of evil that has repercussions to in the Spidey mythos to this day, murders her.

Amazing Spider-Man #122 (July, 1973)
Peter vows to avenge Gwen's death. This vengeance requires that he leave a hallucinating Harry alone. "If you leave, how can I be sure you were ever here?" Harry pleads. But leave Peter does... tracking down the Goblin and planning to kill him. Even though Peter is ultimately unable to commit murder, the Goblin ends up dying anyway, a victim of his own treachery when his spiked jet glider misses its intended target and spears its master instead.

Amazing Spider-Man #126 (November, 1973)
Norman Osborn's death triggered an immediate change in his son. Harry became reclusive and suspicious, especially towards Peter. Then in issue #126 Harry, for the first time, refers to himself as the Green Goblin and is shown holding his father's costume.

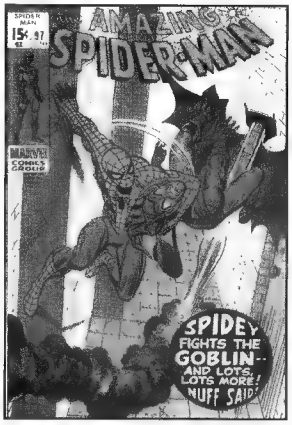
Amazing Spider-Man #127 (December, 1973)
The framework of Harry's madness begins to emerge. He blames Spider-Man for his father's death, believing Spidey to be jealous of both his father and himself. He struggles with accepting his father's responsibility for Gwen Stacy's death.

CBM TRIVIA QUESTION:
How many different people have been the Green Goblin?

If you chose three, count yourself a real Spidey fan. That's right... three different Green Goblins!

Amazing Spider-Man #134 (July, 1974)
Harry learns Peter's secret identity in Then in Amazing *Spider-Man* #135 (August, 1974) Harry goes to one his father's secret hideouts. "This is where he killed my father," Harry says, "What I need... I'll find here."

Amazing Spider-Man #136 (September, 1974)
Harry rigs their apartment with a bomb, but Peter's "spider sense" warns him in time to save himself and Mary Jane. Suspicious, Spider-Man returns to the Goblin's old hideout and finds Harry in full Green Goblin regalia. In their first battle, Harry gains the upper hand, thanks to the drug-laced exhaust fumes of his jet-flier. But fate grants Spidey a reprieve when the Goblin's blasters run out of power.



©MEG 1995

Amazing Spider-Man #137 (October, 1974)
The battle continues... and Spidey eventually overcomes the Goblin, after first saving Aunt May from a bomb Harry planted. When the police arrive, Harry reveals that Peter Parker is secretly Spider-Man. But know one believes him because of his claim that he's the Green Goblin. They dismiss it as the ranting of a lunatic.

©MEG 1995

Amazing Spider-Man #151 (December, 1975)
Harry does not re-appear until this issue. Released from whatever institution he was in, he seems to have been cured of being the Green Goblin. He also no longer remembers that Peter is Spider-Man.

Amazing Spider-Man #157 (June, 1976)
Liz Allen takes an interest in Harry Osborn after he tries to protect her from a villain named Mirage. Romance blooms quickly, and Harry and Liz announce their engagement in *Amazing Spider-Man* #166 (March, 1977).

Amazing Spider-Man #167 (April, 1977)
This issue introduces Harry's psycho-analyst, Dr. Barton Hamilton - who became Green Goblin III in... *Amazing Spider-Man* #175 (December, 1975). I've given away the surprise ending because readers do not learn that Hamilton had stolen the legacy of the Goblin from Harry until issue #179. In fact, writer Len Wein gave readers every reason to believe that Dr. Hamilton was the Goblin's captive since Harry attacks his therapist during a counseling session in this issue.

Amazing Spider-Man #180 (May 1978)
Harry works free of his bonds and dons a Green Goblin outfit in order to "stop the terrible menace I've unleashed." Meanwhile, Spidey has succeeded in unmasking Goblin III and discovers it's not Harry! The good Dr. explains how he learned the Goblin's secrets while he had Harry under hypnosis. "I began to experiment with the Goblin's equipment", Hamilton states, "and felt a sense of POWER such as I had never known before." When Harry shows up, it's Goblin Vs Goblin. Eventually, the third Green Goblin dies in a fashion similar to the first; a victim of his own treachery when an explosion, meant for the others, kills himself instead. And Harry disavows ever becoming the Goblin again, stating it "makes me sick to my stomach!"

Amazing Spider-Man #312 (February 1988)
For a long time it looked as though Harry was indeed free of his father's legacy. Harry and Liz Allen married and soon after had a child, Norman. Business was good for Osborn Chemicals. And there was a new goblin in town (the Hobgoblin), introduced in *Amazing Spider-Man* #238 (March, 1983). Marvel comics seemed content to allow the Green Goblin to languish in comic book limbo.

But in *ASM* #312 Harry dons the Green Goblin costume to protect his family from the Hobgoblin, who comes seeking Norman Osborn's strength enhancing formula.

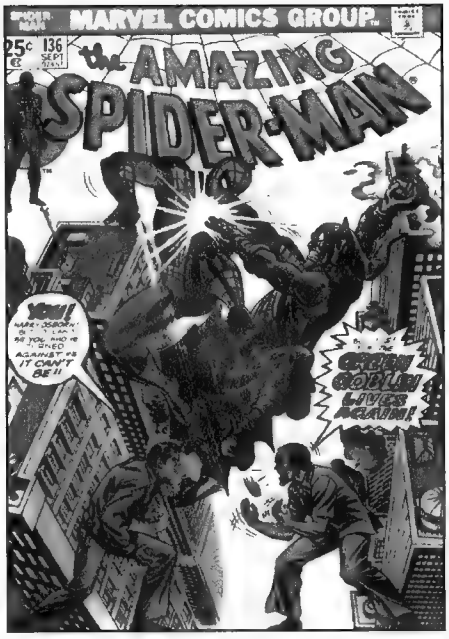
Goblin As Hero?
A few years after *ASM* #312, in *Web Of Spider-Man* #66 and #67 (Summer, 1990) Harry, craving excitement and desiring to remove the tarnish from his father's name, tries to become a superhero. Spider-Man convinces Harry that he lacks the raw power necessary and that it's too dangerous an occupation for a family man. (Now there's

an interesting thought, coming from a married man.)

It's too bad the superhero angle was never explored; a heroic Green Goblin might have proved interesting, at least temporarily. It's also possible Harry's fragile grip on sanity might have been strengthened if he had found a way to, in his own words, "remove the tarnish" from his father's name. And by proving to Harry that he lacked the raw power to be a superhero, Peter may have actually encouraged Harry to take the strength enhancing formula in *Spectacular Spider-Man* #189 (June, 1992) that eventually caused his death.

Spectacular Spider-Man #200 (May, 1993) paints the final chapter in the tragic life of Harry Osborn. This is a powerful tale, filled with poignant moments. There's Harry's vow to Mary Jane, made at the spot where the original Green Goblin murdered Gwen Stacy, "that no matter what happens between the Green Goblin and Spider-Man...I want you to know that you're SAFE. I love you, Mary Jane." Then there is little Normie, tearing up his Spider-Man doll. And finally, there's Harry himself, at war with his inner demons, terrified and terrifying at the same time. In the end, he rescues first Mary Jane and Normie, then Spider-Man, from an exploding building. "Why, Harry?" Peter asks, "Why'd you come BACK for me?" "Hey...what ELSE could I do?" responds Harry, "You're my BEST FRIEND." Harry then goes into convulsions and dies, a victim of the experimental strength enhancing formula.

Few Spider-Man fans really believe the Green Goblin is gone for good. Harry could find a way back, or it could be someone else. Personally, I'm betting on Harry, and I'm betting it's soon. ■


MARVEL COMICS GROUP
25¢ 136 SEPT
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
WOW! MARY-OSBORN IS A LIAR! AS YOU AND ME AGAINST US IT CAN'T BE!!
THE GREEN GOBLIN LIVES AGAIN!
©MEG 1995

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
MARVEL 12¢
14 JULY
WOW!!! JUST WAIT 'TILL YOU SEE The GREEN GOBLIN!
DOES THE GREEN GOBLIN LOOK CUTE TO YOU? DOES HE MAKE YOU WANT TO SMILE? WELL, FORGET IT! HERE THE MOST MONSTROUS MOST DANGEROUS FOE SPIDEY'S EVER FOUGHT!
GUEST-STARRING NONE OTHER THAN THAT RAMPAGING POWERHOUSE, THE INCREDIBLE HULK!
©MEG 1995

Tony Starks has emerged as the national spokesman for Bronze Age comics, and was a contributor to the original Comic Book Marketplace. *His life-long love of comics began at the age of nine (1963) with* Space Mouse #4 *and* Superman Annual #7. *His "Comics In A Flash" column has been regularly published since early 1993 and has been a fan favorite since the first installment.*

TAKE THE TEST

Green Goblin Pop Quiz!

1. In which issue does the original Green Goblin make his first appearance?

2. In which issue does the original Green Goblin die?

3. In which issue is the identity of the original Green Goblin revealed to be Norman Osborn, the father of one of Peter's classmates?

4. In which issue does Harry Osborn first refer to himself as Green Goblin?

5. In which issue does Harry Osborn learn Spider-Man's secret identity?

6. In which issue does Green Goblin II first appear?

7. In which issue(s) does Dr. Hamilton become Green Goblin III?

8. Green Goblin Vs. Hobgoblin?

9. In which issue does Green Goblin II take on the role of superhero?

10. In which issue does Green Goblin II take a strength enhancing formula?

11. In which issue does Green Goblin II die?

ANSWERS

1. ASM #14 2. ASM #122 3. ASM #39 4. ASM #126 5. ASM #134 6. ASM #136 7. ASM #175-180 8. ASM #312 9. Web of Spider-Man #66 & #67 10. Spectacular Spider-Man #189 11. Spectacular Spider-Man #200

UNSEEN GOLD

As the rage for Schomburg covers continues... and more and more Golden Age collectors discover comic book covers specifically related to World War II... it's no wonder that demand for *Exciting Comics* #28 has continued to steadily rise. The fact that this Golden Age book is missing from Gerber doesn't hurt its value either!

EXCITING #28...
gruesome & great Schomburg cover art... and genuinely scarce!

by Matt Nelson

This month's Unseen Gold features one of my favorite "non-Photo Journal" covers. It's the ultimate "close-up" Alex Schomburg World War II cover and features the Black Terror, "Nemesis of Nazis", at his most merciless. It is somewhat ironic that the "white space" where *Exciting Comics* #28 should be hides what many Standard/Nedor aficionados feel may the best cover in the run. And as Ernie Gerber found out, this is one tough book to track down!

As you can see, Schomburg makes a powerful statement on this cover with his depiction of a realistic underwater battle against Nazis. The gruesome scene shows vivid detail in the face of an unfortunate axis warrior who has had his helmet ripped off by the Black Terror. The condemned Nazi KNOWS he is going to die! Seems the Terror was just as ruthless in his determination to stop the Nazis as they were to conquer the world. Cover-dated August 1943, *Exciting Comics* #28 was published during the peak fury of the War and its cover perfectly mirrors the American sentiment of the day as well as masterfully captures the grim nature of combat.

This was Schomburg's fifth cover for *Exciting Comics* and his third consecutive Black Terror cover. Schomburg went on to finish the run of *Exciting* covers, including some excellent airbrush work on the late issues. He also did most of the other Nedor covers, while heavily producing for Timely and Harvey as well.

According to the Mile High collection master list, Mile High copies exist for every issue of *Exciting Comics* with the exception of the final issue (#68). When Gerber photographed groups of Mile Highs for the *Photo-Journal* many of the groups consisted of unbroken runs of titles. It is evident that *Exciting* #1-50-something are Mile Highs, excepting #28 (the missing issue), and #30 (which looks like a low-grade copy). For some reason these two issues were not included by Gerber, although Church copies should exist. Perhaps they were "cherry-picked" and separated from the run at an earlier date, as were many choice Mile Highs.

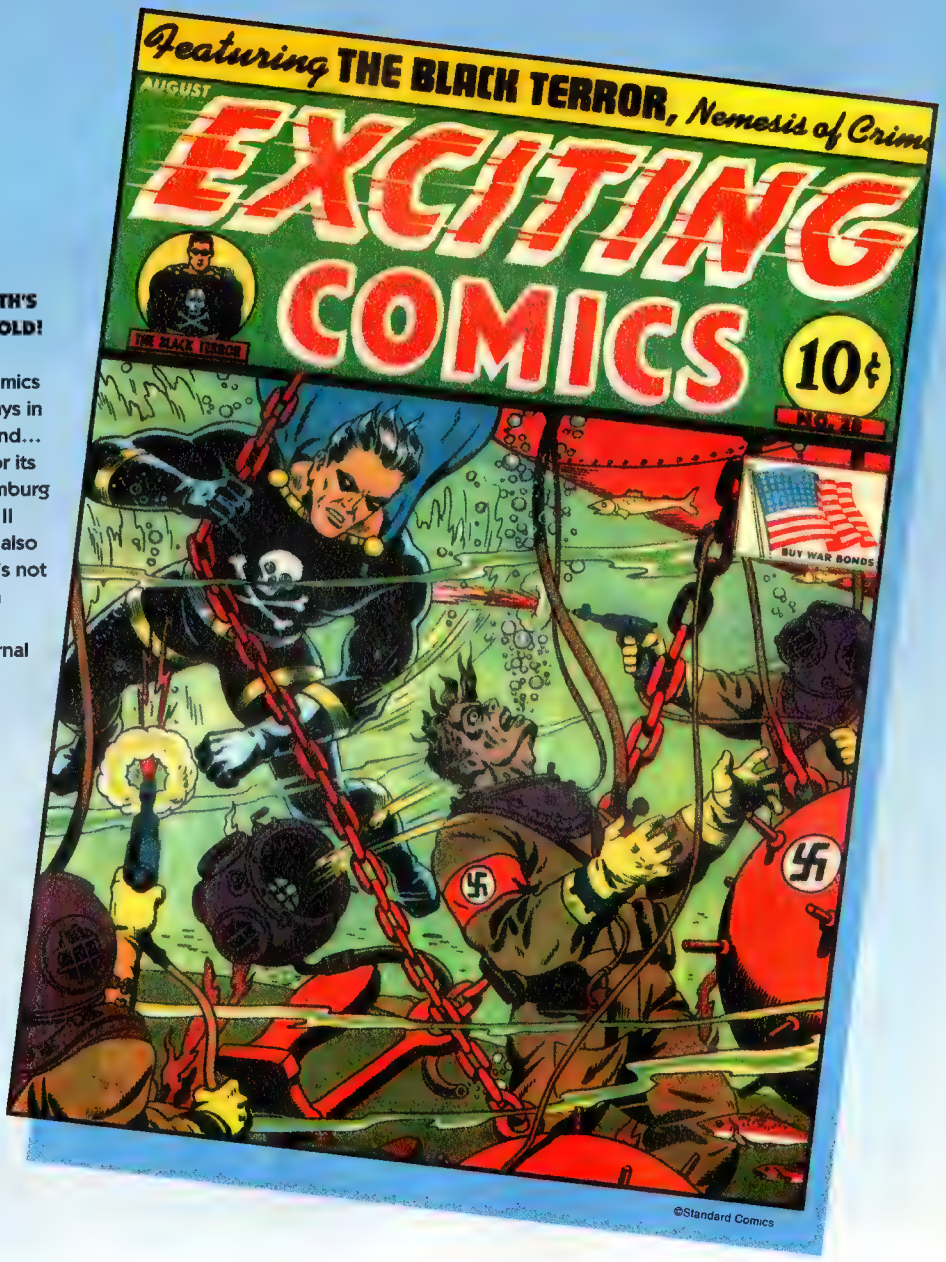
According to Gerber's scarcity index the *Exciting* #28 is rated an "8", which, by his definition, is rare. If one agrees with his estimation of rarity, it would mean that an estimated 11-20 copies still exist. Most of the missing covers are rated 8, while a few are rated "9's" (only 6-10 copies are thought to exist). Considering that *Exciting* issues are usually common enough, #28's scarcity really stands out in the run.

I have personally only seen one copy of *Exciting* #28 offered for public sale in the past year. It was a low-grade copy that quickly sold for three times Guide. And I know of three other copies in collections. So the chances seem slim that one could find this book in any grade at any price. If by some stroke of good fortune you do happen across one... scoop it up! The rarity of the issue and its classic cover make it one of the more desirable and collectible World War II comics around. ■

COLOR GALLERY

THIS MONTH'S UNSEEN GOLD!

Exciting Comics #28 is always in high demand... not only for its Alex Schomburg World War II cover, but also because it's not pictured in Gerber's Photo-Journal Guide To Comics.



© O Better Publications

Alex Schomburg's masterpiece of underwater art on the cover of **STARTLING COMICS #52** (July) caught the eye of newsstand-goers all across the country during the early summer of 1948.

(See "Adventures Into Weird Words" by Pat S. Calhoun.)

©Tobby Press

Using the pseudonym Al Reid, Alex Schomburg drew **JON JUAN #1** (Spring 1950) from cover to cover! This was the only time that Schomburg drew an entire comic... 32 pages uninterrupted by ads, plus the cover!

(See "Men Of Mystery" by Jeff Gelb.)

(Right)
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #31
(December 1965). Ditko's stylized cover is still a classic.

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
31 DEC
"IF THIS BE MY DESTINY..."
DEDICATED TO YOU, THE GREAT NEW MARVEL BREED OF READER!

©MEG 1995

(Below)
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #33
(February 1966). Many avid Silver Age Marvel collectors still vote for #33 as the best early cover of the run.

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
32 JAN
MAN ON A RAMPAGE!
WITH HIS AUNT MAY GRAVELY ILL IN THE HOSPITAL, SPIDER-MAN FIGHTS AS NEVER BEFORE!

©MEG 1995

(Above)
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #32
(January 1966). Inset of Aunt May, is her first cover appearance.

(See "Everything I Ever Needed To Know About Life, I Learned From Comics" by Kent Martin.)

©MEG 1995

Ricocheting bullets, hooded menaces, ruthless gangsters, and beautiful damsels- in-distress adorn these dynamic Black Terror covers.

(See "Nemesis Of Crime... The Black Terror" by Stephen Gentner.)

Black Terror ©Publication Enterprises Ltd.

Japanese and German fighter pilots, a German U-Boat commander, and some post-war radar saboteurs have much to fear from The Black Terror!

All eight books pictured here are Mile High copies. (Courtesy the Stephen Gentner collection.)

MARVEL
COMICS
IN THIS ISSUE
HOW THE HUMAN TORCH WAS BORN
THIS IS THE FAMOUS STORY OF THE HUMAN TORCH WHICH THOUSANDS OF READERS HAVE REQUESTED US TO BRING YOU - IN ALL ITS AMAZING FURY!
©MEG 1995

MARVEL COMICS #92 (June 1949) and **SUB-MARINER #32** (June 1949)... perhaps two of the most sought after and scarce "last issues" in today's comic book marketplace.

(See "Multiple Origins" by Jon Berk)

Many collectors feel that **YOUNG MEN #24** (December 1953), is one of the most undervalued and difficult to find comics. It contains the "rebirth of Marvel's Golden Age characters in the 1950's.

MARVEL COMICS #1 (October or November 1939)... the grand-daddy of all Timely, Atlas, and Marvel Comics. (Price Guide #25 value: $85,000 in Near Mint!)

OUR FIGHTING FORCES #51
(November 1959), cover art by legendary Russ Heath.

©DC 1995

WHAT AM I DOIN' DOWN HERE? I'M SUPPOSED TO BE A TOMMY GUNNER! NOT A TARGET FOR A TNT FISH!
A NEW GUNNER+SARGE STORY!
WHROOSH
THERE WERE LOTS OF TIMES THE GUNNER ASKED HIMSELF--WHAT WAS HE DOING IN THE WAR! AND THE SARGE'S ANSWER ALWAYS SURPRISED HIM!
UNDERWATER GUNNER!

©DC 1995

The first Gunner & Sarge splash page by the great Joe Kubert.

(See "Mick's Miscellany" by Mick Rabin.)

ABOVE
"Special Mission", a hand-painted limited edition cel (signed by William Shatner) featuring Scotty, McCoy, Kirk, Sulu, and Spock.

ABOVE RIGHT
Production cel of Lt. Arex, a regularly appearing crew member of the animated series.

ABOVE
"Star Ship Enterprise" in orbit around a strange planet.

LEFT
Cat-like in her appearance Lt. M'Ress, was another cast member unique to the animated series.

Star Trek ©Paramount 1995

Comic Books for Sale

DC Golden Age:

Action #89 VF/NM (Small hole punch top right) $100
Adventure #121 FN $150
Adventure #121 VG/FN $100
Adventure #122 FN $150
Adventure #127 VG (Tape) $70
Adventure #138 VG $60
Adventure #140 VG $65
Adventure #145 VG/FN $90
Adventure #146 VG $70
Adventure #147 GD $30
Adventure #168 VG $55
Adventure #188 VG/FN $85
Adventure #190 GD $40
Adventure #191 GD $35
Adventure #192 GD/VG $50
Adventure #194 FN+ $95
Adventure #200 VG+ $110
All Star #20 VG $275
Batman #31 GD/VG $150
Batman #34 GD $110
Batman #73 FN $185
Batman #77 VG/FN $150
Batman #80 VG/FN $125
Detective #141 G/VG $85
Detective #151 GD $65
Detective #165 GD/VG $85
Detective #175 VG- $95
Detective #209 VG/FN $115
More Fun #75 VF/NM (Beautiful!) $1,600
Real Fact #5 GD $95
Real Fact #13 VG/FN $110
Real Fact #16 VF $125
Star Spangled #55 VF (Water stain back cover) $90
Star Spangled #43 VF $200
Superboy #8 G/VG $75
Superboy #10 VG $110
Superboy #12 GD $45
Superboy #13 GD $55
Superboy #16 VG $70
Superboy #21 VG $50
Superman #38 FR spine splt $75
Superman #39 VG $135
Superman #43 GD/VG $90
Superman #46 GD/VG $80
Superman #67 GD/VG $70
Superman #87 GD $45
Congo Bill #1 GD $70
Frontier Fighters #7 VG $55
Funny Stuff Wheaties Giveaway VG $55
Pat Boone #4 VF $140
Strange Adventures #27 VG/FN . $100

Fawcett :

Captain Marvel #19 F/VF $225
Captain Marvel #25 VF $275
Captain Marvel #33 VF- $175
Captain Marvel #34 NM (Hawkeye copy) $375
Captain Marvel Jr. #23 VF/NM . $175
Captain Marvel Jr. #24 VF+ $175
Captain Marvel Jr. #26 VF $150
Captain Marvel Jr. #27 VF/NM . $175
Captain Marvel Jr. #28 VF+ $150
Whiz #19 VF/NM $500
Whiz #29 VF/NM $350
Whiz #42 NM $200
Whiz #59 VF/NM $150

Miscellaneous:

Captain Midnight Decoder Manual w/mailer 1942 NM $200
Modern #49 VF/NM $175
Yellowjacket #7 (Skull cover) VF/NM $150
Target #Vol2/#12 VF- $225
Silver Streak #19 NM (Possible MH but NO code) $275
Doc Savage #10 NM $350
Police #22 VF $300
Funny Pages (1937) #V2/1 VF/NM $450
Disney Firestone Giveaway 1947 $225
March of Comics #20 FN+ . . . $1,200
Flash Gordon (Harvey) #2 VF/NM $80
Flash Gordon (Harvey) #3 VF . . . $60
Archie #11 VF $160
Jughead #3 VF- $150
Fighting American #6 VF- $200
Felix the Cat #1 VF $125

EC:

Haunt of Fear #15 (Mile High) $3,600
Haunt of Fear #24 (Gaines File copy) #2 . . . . . $540

Others:

House of Mystery #1 VF-/VF (White Pages) $1,250
If the Devil Would Talk # NM . . . $275
Lars of Mars #10 FN/VF $190
Buccaneers #23 VF/NM $135

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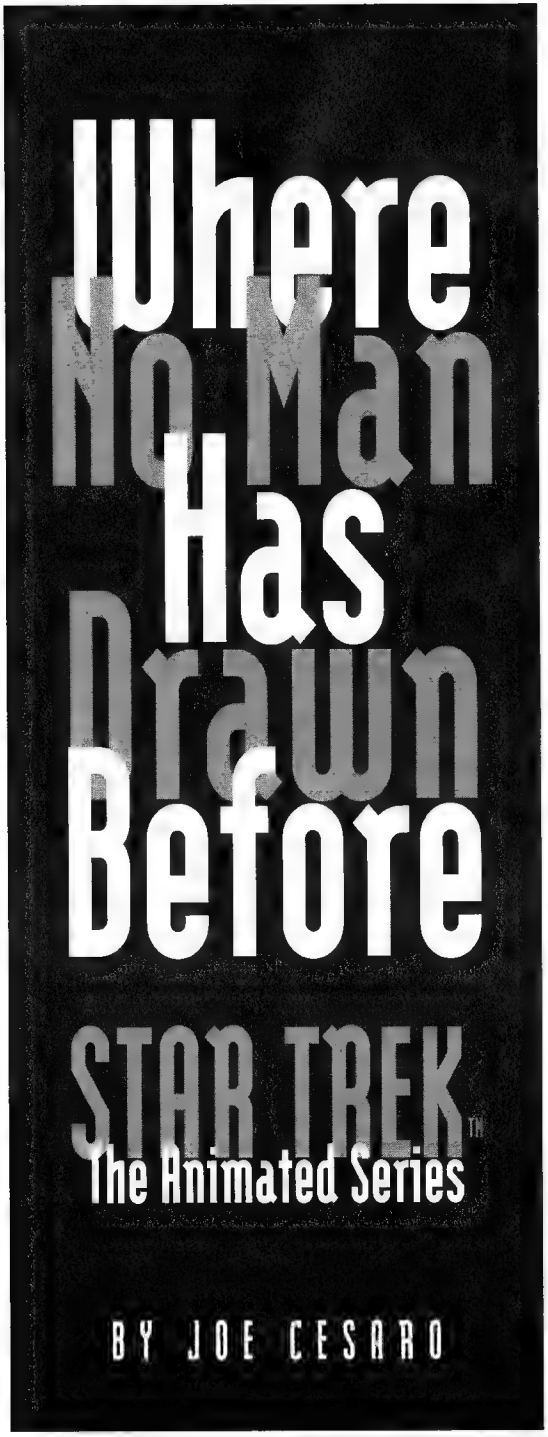


The Star Trek concept was born in 1966, from the creative and fertile mind of Gene Roddenberry. After a few minor adjustments and two pilots, the cast was set and the crew of the starship Enterprise began its fabled five year mission "to seek out new worlds and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man had gone before." The mission was cut short however, when NBC abruptly canceled the show in 1969 after only three seasons. This upset millions of fans and viewers, and led to an unprecedented mail-in campaign to protest the show's cancellation. With his new found support, Gene Roddenberry began negotiations with Paramount and NBC to bring the show back. It's generally accepted that the crew and cast of Star Trek did not reappear (except for syndicated repeats) to continue its mission until 1979 with the first feature length film "Star Trek The Motion Picture."

What is usually forgotten is the animated series (which first appeared on NBC in 1974) that served as a "bridge" during this ten-year gap. Although the animated series featured the original cast, many of the original writers, and was supervised by Gene Roddenberry himself... it's considered by some as a mere "footnote" in the timeline of Star Trek history.

Critical & Ratings Success

Star Trek (the Animated Series) featured voices of William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, James Doohan, George Takei, DeForest Kelley, Majel Barrett, and Nichelle Nichols. This historic event brought back the original cast for the first time since the original show's cancellation. The series was produced by the prestigious Filmation Studios who beat out fierce competition for the rights to do the animated series. (These competitors included the famous Hanna-Barbera Studios, among other notables.)

The animated series was both a critical and ratings success and was honored with an Emmy Award for "Best Children's Television Series" in 1975 (for the episode "Sharper Than A Serpent's Tooth"). Even with all this good fortune, the show was abruptly canceled after NBC fulfilled its two year (22 episode) commitment...and basically was never to be heard from again. Where did this great show go? Where has this important piece of Star Trek history disappeared to? Why did it vanish?

The Show That Time Forgot

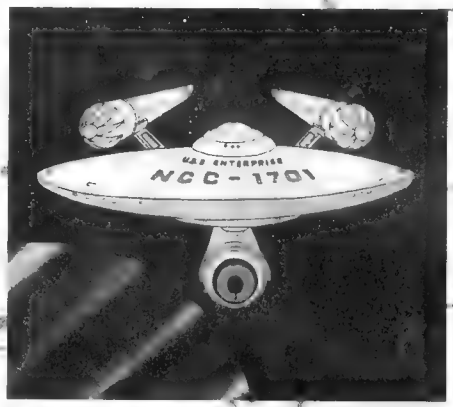
There has been much speculation why the show has taken a back seat to all the other versions of Star Trek. While most fans remember the animated series, a great many of them have not seen an episode since the show was canceled in 1975. The show has never been repeated on a national basis until recently when it began to run on the SCI-FI channel. So, unlike its live action counterpart that ran constantly in syndication and built an enormous following and fan support, the animated version has never really been fully marketed or developed.

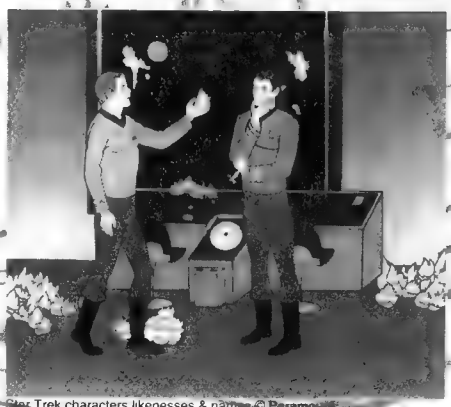
The animated series has been accessible on video tape in the past, but has never been heavily marketed or readily available.

While some stores do carry one or two of the animated video tapes (each containing two episodes), Paramount has never actively tried to promote this series or its videos.

Bad Timing?

Another serious problem for the animated series was timing. While most of the fans were excited that the original cast, under Gene Roddenberry's leadership, would return to the small screen even in animated form, many still craved only the beloved live-action version. At the time the animated series was released, there were no feature films or spin-offs such as "Next Generation" or "Voyager" to broaden the minds of Star Trek fans and further their acceptance of another product. With this contingent of fans, only the original series would suffice. To this day, some fans still only consider the original live action show the "true" Star Trek. The books, novels, comics, games, etc., are just so much "folly" to this small but vocal group.





Star Trek characters likenesses & names © Paramount

Another key aspect of this timing problem was the era that the show was released. Animation as a medium in the 1970's was not as popular as it once was. The "Golden Age of Animation" (1945-1965) had just ended. Many of the great and popular animation studios (e.g. Warner Brothers/Bugs Bunny, MGM/Tom & Jerry, and UPA/Mr. Magoo had already closed their doors and stopped making animated films. The reported reasons for this were increasing production costs and/or the decline in popularity of cartoons.

One of the survivors was Hanna-Barbera. They had just previously become a prime-time TV fixture with super-popular animated programs such as "The Flintstones," "The Jetsons" and "Johnny Quest". But even HB began to see a lessening in the popularity of their animated cartoons. Their shows, along with all the other animated films and series of the time were now relegated to the so called "wasteland" of television animation. All cartoons were now grouped together and shown on Saturday mornings where they were labeled "For Kids Only." This erroneous label turned out to be a major obstacle for animation... particularly for quality cartoons such as Star Trek and others that were trying to appeal to a more mature audience.

Paramount's Step-Child

Possibly the most interesting reason the animated series has never been properly marketed or returned to the screen is the posture of Paramount Studios over the years regarding the show. Usually every detail must go through Paramount for approval when it pertains to Star Trek. This is true for the movies, the new live-action shows, or any related products. The only exception to this hard and fast rule may be the animated series. Since Paramount was never really involved in making the animated series, it probably considers it a step-child to their great Star Trek franchise.

Whether all this conjecture is based on fact or speculation is still to be determined... yet one thing remains beyond question. The animated series is an excellent, exciting, and quality show that has earned its rightful place in the Star Trek legacy.

At present there has been a resurgence of popularity in animation and in animation art. With prime-time television shows like "The Simpsons" and blockbuster movies like "The Lion King", animation and animation art are at the cusp of a new "Golden Age."

Cartoons are no longer "just for kids." Adults are rushing out in droves to see their favorite animated characters and purchasing the art from these shows and films in record numbers. The original art from the Star Trek animated series is extremely rare and can command thousands of dollars for key images and set-ups.

Animation art dealers as well as Star Trek collectibles dealers are always in search of these elusive pieces of Star Trek history. With demand high for this art, Paramount has licensed hand-painted limited editions and limited edition seri-cels of the animated series to fulfill this ever increasing demand. If the popularity of the Star Trek animation art is any indicator, then the time seems right to finally acknowledge the animated Star

To Seek Out New Words...

Interviews With Two of the Series' Creators

D.C. Fontana
Story Editor

Dorothy... what was your fondest memory of the animated series?
There is not just one that really stands out, but the one thing I do remember was the great ability that we had to do things we could not on the live action show. We could show strange environments, such as "The Ambergris Element" episode where the crew was always underwater on the planet Argo... or have a gigantic Spock like the one in "The Infinite Vulcan" episode that Walter Koenig (Chekov) wrote. This gave us the ability to do things in animation that we could not do or do well in live action. This was due to the relative low cost of producing these effects and the great ability of the animators to just draw our creations on paper. This creativity really made all of us happy while working on the show.

In what other respects do you think the animated show was better than the live action?
Well, again it was easier to do all the special effects in animation because the animators could just draw them, and it kept the budget down. When we wanted more aliens we just created more aliens by drawing them. If we wanted a new ship, we just drew a new ship, we didn't have to do elaborate models and make them to scale. This really helped our creativity. Every aspect of the production would be enhanced with animation, including things we couldn't do well in the live action, either due to money or impossible special effects.

Why do you think the original cast was so receptive to the animated version of Star Trek?
Loyalty to the original series. It was an opportunity for them to all get together and do it again, and to work with these same people. I think it also was the love and respect they had for the show and their camaraderie towards one another... plus the actors didn't have to spend a lot of time working on the animated series. Where the live action show took a week to shoot, they could come in for only a few hours and tape or record their dialogue and then they were finished. It

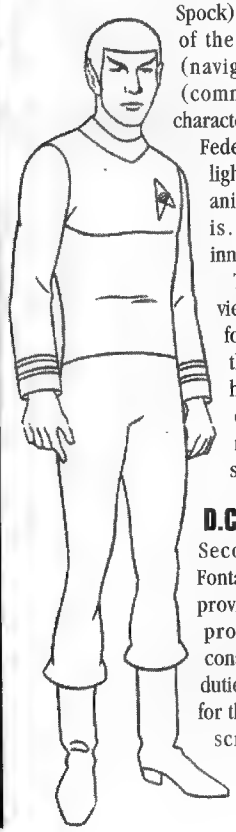
Trek as a part of American culture. The time is right for the show's resurgence.

Star Trek - the Animated Series has many other things going for it to make a return. Today Star Trek is watched by more people than ever. At present there have been seven movies and three TV spin-offs. The public seems more open to different interpretations and stylings of the original Star Trek message and image. With this in mind, all the wonderful creations, developments, and characters that were created in the animated series can now be truly appreciated... and by a much larger audience.

Making Star Trek History

There were many historical developments that first occurred in the animation version. Among the most prominent were; (a) the inclusion of another door on the bridge that led to something other than the elevator and (b) the now famous holo-deck. These two important changes have influenced all future generations of Star Trek.

Another important development in the animated version was the creation of two unique and important crew members, both assigned to the Enterprise bridge. For the first time (other than Spock) two "non-humanoid" aliens were part of the crew of the Enterprise... Lt. Arex (navigational officer), and Lt. M'Ress (communications officer). Both of these characters set the tone for future aliens aboard Federation starships. When viewed in the light of present day Star Trek shows, the animated series can be seen for what it is... a real pioneer in plot and cast innovation!

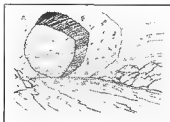


There are other reasons why fans are viewing the animated Star Trek with a new found appreciation. First and foremost is the revelation that Gene Roddenberry himself served as executive producer, overseeing the entire production, and making sure it conformed to his high standards.

D.C. Fontana

Second was the contribution of D.C. Fontana. As Gene's long time assistant, she provided an enormous commitment to the project and served as story editor and consultant. She performed the same tireless duties for the animated version that she did for the live action series. D.C. supervised the scripts and story content to ensure a quality product and a smooth transition between live action and

animation. In fact, she was so determined to make the animated series a success, she wrote an episode herself entitled "Yesteryear" that is considered by many to be one of the finest of the animated episodes.



D.C. Fontana's "Yesteryear"

In "Yesteryear", the Enterprise returns to visit the "Guardian of Forever" to explore the planet Orion's past. When they return to the present they find that history has been slightly altered and Mr. Spock is now a stranger and has never been a member of their crew. Knowing somehow history has changed, Mr. Spock attempts to return to his past via the guardian portal... and to try to rectify the time anomaly problem. After calculating the location in the past he should return to, Mr. Spock realizes that he must relive a sensitive time in his life... when he was a child enduring the Vulcan coming-of-age ritual, Kahs-wan.

Great Writers

To ensure the quality of the animated shows, many of the live action script writers returned to pen new stories or sequels of original Star Trek episodes. There were also a few "special" writers who contributed stories for the animated series. Larry Niven, an extremely popular science fiction writer, contributed the episode "Slave Weapon." Walter Koenig (Chekov) wrote "The Infinite Vulcan", and Howard Weinstein (who went on to be editor of the Star Trek comic book) contributed his first Star Trek story with "The Pirates of Orion".

Two of the popular sequels were penned by original writers David Gerrold ("More Tribbles, More Troubles") and Stephen Kandel ("Mudd's Passion"). In the Tribble episode, those beloved little creatures along with the erasable Cyrano Jones return to cause mayhem on the Enterprise and cause the usually fearless Klingons to cringe.

In "Mudd's Passion" the Enterprise crew is re-acquainted with their old nemesis Harry Mudd as he tries to convince the planet's lonely miners to buy a new love potion he has "discovered". After being rescued by Capt. Kirk and brought aboard the Enterprise, Harry persuades Nurse Chapel to use the potion on Mr. Spock. The plot thickens as Mr. Spock becomes obsessed with Nurse Chapel and risks all to save her from danger. One of the more humorous entries, "Mudd's Passion" has an interesting, ironic ending. Both of these episodes are well written and extremely faithful to the original

was an easy project for them to do. Leonard Nimoy (Spock) actually once sent in a tape of his voice part from New York where he was currently appearing in a play and couldn't make it back in time for the taping of an episode. It was a fun project for them, they really enjoyed it.

Do you think the animated series was done well and in the Star Trek tradition?

Yes! Yes I do! Filmation was one of the better animation studios. They really cared about producing the show right and making it a quality product like the original. Also, all of Filmation's animation was done in America and not shipped overseas, which was standard by that time. This made it a totally American made series, which we all appreciated.

I think the show was really well done. The people at Filmation, Lou Scheimer (President), Hal Sutherland (Director), and all the other people involved (especially the animators) took great pride in making the cartoon as close to the live action series as possible. They took great pains to make all the characters look like their live action counterparts, and the stories were very good... they did not "talk down" to the audience. They were really great stories.

In the live action we had an hour to develop a plot and subplots, in the animated series we had only 22 minutes, so we had no subplots, only plots. . but in animation you could tell more story in less time. The animated show was Star Trek, and it was a well done show! We didn't skimp on the stories for the animated form... they were genuine Star Trek stories.

Besides the one's you wrote, which episode is your favorite?

My favorite episode was "More Tribbles, More Troubles" written by David Gerrold. This could not have been done in live action. The way the tribbles moved and grew was so creative, it was a real fun episode and it had a good story line and comedy. I think it was very charming. I also really enjoyed "The Infinite Vulcan" written by Walter Koenig (Chekov). It was also a very interesting episode and (again) could not have been done in live action.

Why do you think so many Trekkers don't give credit to or acknowledge the animated series?

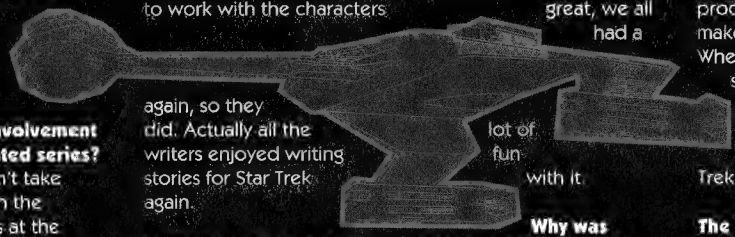
Well, I think they were not convinced it could be done properly in

animation, so they just ignored it. Some people say that it is not part of the Star Trek lore because it was not live action. That is not a fair criteria for exclusion... because then you couldn't include all the novels, games, comics, and the animation which are all just as good a product. In fact the animation was possibly (in some instances) even better. Unfortunately it has been overlooked... and there were so many good episodes! The animation is definitely good Star Trek material, but if they don't choose to acknowledge it, it is their loss! They are definitely missing something!

What about Paramount's involvement with the animated series?
Paramount didn't take much interest in the animated series at the time they didn't object to it either. I think they never embraced it as their own. They had little or no input in the series. Only Lou Scheimer and Hal Sutherland made comments and changes with Gene and myself. Usually everything we do has to go through Paramount. But this one time, they did not have any interest. The great thing about this is we had more control, and there were no delays in making the series.

How did you get all those quality writers (Gerrold, Kandel, Peeples, Armen, etc.) to pen scripts for the animated series?
That was easy, we were having a Writer's Guild strike and writing for animation did not count because you could write and submit one script and not be forced to join or become a member of the Animation Union. We all took this as a great opportunity and without fear of breaking the ranks of the current strike.

Whose idea was it to write sequels to some of the great episodes from the live action series?
All story ideas were generated by the writers... and yes, the sequels were a great idea! The guys who wrote the sequels (Stephen Kandel and David Gerrold) thought it was fun to work with the characters again, so they did. Actually all the writers enjoyed writing stories for Star Trek again.



How did Gene feel about the animated series?
He liked it and really enjoyed it. He was really involved with the show and took the time and trouble to make sure the look and feel of the show was genuine Star Trek. He read the scripts, supervised the storyboards and then he made his comments and suggestions. I think he was very enthusiastic about the show and that he truly enjoyed the animated series.

In 1975 Star Trek the Animated Series won an Emmy. How did you react?
We were proud! The live action had won awards for technical things, such as special effects, but this was the first time we were honored for the writing and for the actual show.

What did you do different in the animated series that you couldn't do for the live action show?
Well, we were all very aware of the unlimited potential we could explore with animation. We did not have to spend lots of money on costumes, set design, or hand crafted space ships. Anything that we wanted we could just draw with as much detail as possible. We added many more aliens and exotic locals to each episode because the budget allows for this in cartoons. It was great, we all had a lot of fun with it.

Why was Walter Koenig not in the animated version of Star Trek?
You should ask Lou Scheimer that question. My theory is that most of the money in the budget was going to pay the actors doing voice over work. We had a lot of leeway with the scripts and animation, but most of the money was probably paid to the actors. Walter did, however, write an episode as a sort of compensation to him. This was great because he really wanted to become a writer and this was one of his first attempts. I think it really helped establish him as a writer. As you know, his episode "The Infinite Vulcan" is one of my favorites.

What other memories do you have of the animated series?
I have fond memories and a true love and affection for all the people involved in making the animated series. The actors, writers, and all the people behind the scenes working on the animation. A great deal of effort went into it and there was an enormous amount of enthusiasm from Gene, myself, and everyone involved to make this a quality series. When people ignore it, they are neglecting all the work that went into making this a true Star Trek show. It was a enormous effort to produce this show and to make it genuinely Star Trek. When you write off this show, you write off all this hard work and you write off the true meaning behind Star Trek.

The episode you wrote entitled "Yesteryear" is considered one of the finest episodes of the series. How did you come up with the idea?
Well I started out thinking I would do a sequel to the episode "Sitting On The Edge Of Forever" where the Captain and the crew encounter the time portal and go back into the past... but instead I just used the portal as a device to tell the story. I always loved exploring Mr. Spock and his relationship with his family (which I wrote about two times in the original series).

This time I wanted to do a "what if?" type of story. My premise was "what if we could see Mr. Spock when he was a child?" My story evolved around this

live action episodes that spawned them.

Commitment To Detail

Another interesting aspect of the animated show was its commitment to detail. Everyone involved... from the animators, to the writers, to the actors... all made sure that this series would have the look and feel of the original.

The dedicated animators made certain that the drawings of the characters were as close as possible to the live action cast. The Starship Enterprise was painstakingly drawn from the original models and in every conceivable angle to ensure that the animated version would do justice to the most fabled vessel in science fiction history.

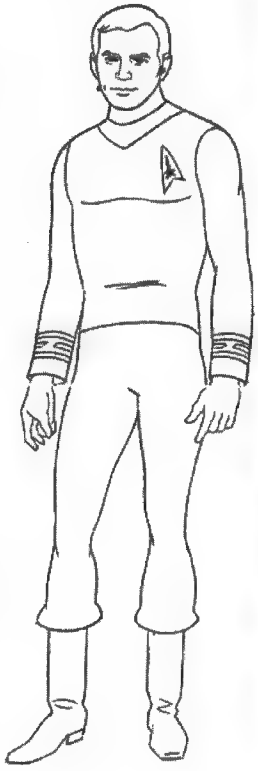
Even the special effects sequences were carefully orchestrated by Reuben Timmins who was a top specialist for special effects in the animation industry. The writers with but 22 short minutes to tell an entire story (50 minutes in the live action shows) did an amazingly skillful job. Making use of animation's unique ability to tell more story in less time, they were able to write excellent stories with more action sequences and less dialogue.

Original Cast

The most important aspect of the animated series (and the one that made it so authentic), was the voice characterization used in the show. The original cast returned together for the first time since the original live action show to voice their own personal character parts. Jimmy Doohan and Majel Barret also contributed their voices to most of the other male and female characters in the animated series, getting a chance to show off their considerable acting talents.

While many people believed that the cast recorded on separate days, they actually recorded as an ensemble on most occasions. This dispels the myth that they did not get along and helps to further the "integrity" of the animated series.

These 22 episodes are the only instance that Star Trek actually returned to the screen with the original cast and in the original



concept, and one about loss or death of a loved one as it relates to children. I have always felt that at some point a young child will encounter a period of his life when they love something (human or animal) that will pass away while he or she is young. Also that it is kinder and more mature to let that something die in dignity without experiencing pain rather than letting it live longer for your own needs. This was also a great opportunity to see how Mr. Spock matured from a child and began to think and act as a Vulcan.

NBC was a little skeptical or worried about showing this story to children. Remember, even though the animated series was written for adults, it was broadcast on Saturday mornings where there was a large children's audience. As I recall, we had no complaints or letters from anyone questioning the subject matter. I think everyone accepted the message we intended the episode to convey. It was a very memorable story, one that I think sticks out in everyone's memory.

Thanks for a great interview Dorothy...
I enjoyed it!

Lou Scheimer
Producer

How did Filmation get the OK to do the animated Star Trek?
Well, there were a few animation studios interested in making Star Trek in the animated version. I know Hanna-Barbera was definitely one of them, and there were others. I met with the executives from Paramount (I think it was their business affairs people) and with Gene Roddenberry... and pitched them my idea of how we should do the Star Trek cartoon. I guess they liked our offer the best.

We assured Paramount and Gene Roddenberry our version would be true to the original... and that we would make it as close as possible to the live action series. I promised them the characters portrayed would look like they do in the live action version, or at least as close as possible.

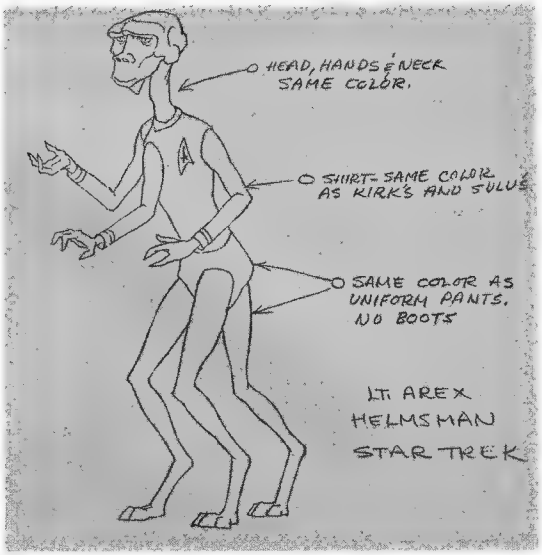
I also promised them that the Starship Enterprise would be identical to the one the fans were accustomed to. I knew how important the ship was to Gene and the fans. Gene Roddenberry became executive producer and his assistant, D.C. Fontana, became story editor on the show. I think that they liked the idea that Gene would supervise the technical aspects of the show and insure it was going to look like Star Trek... while Dorothy would make sure the stories were in the true Star Trek vein. Another thing in our favor was we had the writers from the live action series write many of the scripts for the animated version. This insured that we would be true to the original.

What did you personally think of the show?
I think it was the most faithful adaptation of a live action series into animation ever produced. It was totally true to the original live action. I have to give a lot of credit to Gene Roddenberry and Dorothy, they worked very hard to make sure the show translated well into animation. Their input was very important.
I think our stories were live action stories that were just animated. We had more special effects and we could really open up the show with all the exotic locals that they could not do with the live action. We could do a lot more with our story in 22 minutes, than they could with an hour. I like to think our series was more action, less talk.

How did you feel about the "Best Children's Series" Emmy Award you received for the animated Star Trek?
I was glad we won an Emmy, though I didn't think it should have been for "Best Children's Series." We did the show to appeal to an adult audience. It was written for an adult audience, and the award should have been for an adult achievement. But the show was shown on Saturday mornings, which is when all cartoons were shown at that time, so we had a large children's audience, so that is what the award was for, but I'm still glad we got one anyhow.

Did you do anything previously with Star Trek that you didn't do in previous animated shows?
No, not really. There were no new or special techniques used. The look of it, the faithfulness of it to the original live action was excellent and unprecedented for the time though. I mean we had already done a few adaptations from live action television shows and movies, like "My Favorite Martian" and "Fantastic Voyage" but none of them were exactly like the live action shows the way Star Trek was. I have nothing but respect for all the people involved who made it such a fine series.

Which episode is your favorite?
Well, I really enjoyed all the episodes but if I had to choose one I would have to say "Yesteryear" was definitely my favorite. I think it was the most meaningful . . . it sends the message to kids "be positive in the face of death." The animal that was the young Spock's pet, was a surrogate or metaphor for parents, grandparents, or friends who die. It shows how to cope with the problems of the death of someone close to you. I'm pretty sure it was the first time a cartoon dealt with the subject of death. I think it was a really meaningful and caring show, especially at the time in history it was first produced and considering it aired on Saturday mornings. It was beautiful.


HEAD, HANDS & NECK SAME COLOR.
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SAME COLOR AS UNIFORM PANTS. NO BOOTS
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STAR TREK

ship, and with the original costumes. Thus giving it a special place in Star Trek history.

Best Children's Series?

All this hard work and effort to resurrect Star Trek may have gone unnoticed, but certainly not unrewarded. In 1975, in the shows second season, the series won the Emmy Award for "Best Children's Series". This was the first time an animated series had ever won this prestigious award.

The cartoon, with its strong stories and exciting visual effects, made this series a cut above all previous animated shows and continued Gene Roddenberry's extraordinary vision of Star Trek and the future.

He once said "the true meaning of Star Trek were the characters and the story" and if you accept his analysis, then the animated version is "true" Star Trek on both counts... and is a vital part of Star Trek history! Who knows? Maybe ST/TAS will finally "live long and prosper"! ■

Born in 1966, Joseph Cesaro was enthusiastic about collectibles at an early age. After building one of the largest private baseball card collections on the east coast, he discovered animation art. Starting out with just two cels, his passion for them grew exponentially. He eventually started his own animation gallery in Staten Island. Today, his love of animation art is now all encompassing. Joe is the president of Sunday Funnies, Inc. a wholesale distributor of animation and comic art. Cesaro is a graduate of St. Johns Pharmacy School of New York and he is a licensed Pharmacist.

How much input did Gene Roddenberry have?
Gene was the executive producer on the show. He had a considerable amount of say in the making of each episode. Dorothy was the story editor and she too had a great deal of input. Gene and Dorothy kept a close eye on all aspects of the show to make sure it always looked and sounded authentic.

What about NBC and Paramount?
NBC had a very unique arrangement with us. They were not able to change or alter any of the stories. This came about because Gene wanted to make sure the show was faithful to the original, and he wanted no interference by the network. The only time they could suggest a change was because of the programming practices department (censors), but they never did. Paramount never had anything to do with the show. They were only concerned with the distribution rights of the videos. Other than that they had no input.

Why do you think the show was canceled?
Well we had gotten a fairly large order of 22 episodes and a two year commitment, which we were pretty happy with. At the time most of the shows did not last too long. We really never expected it to go longer than their initial commitment. The ratings were fine, but nothing spectacular. If the show was on the air now, it would definitely be a phenomenal success. Yeah, no doubt about it. In today's market a show like that, especially one about Star Trek would be a ratings monster!

What was it like to work with Gene Roddenberry?
It was great! We became very good friends after the show and continued to stay in touch until his unfortunate passing. I had heard all the rumors about how difficult he was to work with... and that he never got along with Paramount. He didn't, but that was never the case with me. I never had a problem with him, I thought he was great. I really enjoyed making these films with him. I actually called him a few months before he died to ask him what he thought about doing an animated version of the Next Generation. He said, "yeah, it would be great, let's do it, I'll talk to Paramount, we'll bring it back." But unfortunately he died before we ever got it off the ground. It's a shame—it would have made a great cartoon.

Did you know when you were making the animated series that Star Trek would become such a phenomenon?
Well, I know that I always enjoyed the original show. I loved Sci-Fi, and I knew that there was such an enormous built-in fan base for this show. Even at the time we were making the animated version, I could see how loyal and dedicated so many people were to the show, but I can't really say I knew it would be the enormous success and the phenomenon that it is today.

Did you know at the time that you created the animated version of Star Trek that the artwork (cels, drawings, and storyboards) would be in such great demand... be displayed in museums, or command such prices?
Absolutely! I had a good idea that the art from this film would be worth a small fortune someday. I saw how much work we put into this film, there were a couple of cels of the Enterprise that were extremely large, that I just knew were going to be worth a lot of money. The backgrounds that we did were so good and had such great detail, that they were works of art by themselves. I knew that they would be worth a heck of a lot of money one day. You know, we started selling the art work from our cartoons even before Star Trek came out, so I had a good idea that there was a market for this type of art, but I never knew that it would be such a hot commodity like it is today. Animation art is such a phenomenon, I think it's great though, it's a great art form and deserves all the attention it is getting.

Do you remember why Walter Koenig (Chekov) was not in the animated series?
Well I don't really remember why he was not there, but I do remember Leonard Nimoy being very upset at the time when we were casting the animated series. One of the reasons I think (and I don't mean to slight any character) was that in animation, you don't need that many characters. The stories were not long enough to support that many different characters, and we already had a lot of different characters on board. Though I'm unclear as why he was chosen not to be included.

How did you re-create the Starship Enterprise so well in animation?
Well, we had all of the original models from Paramount to look at, and there were so many photographs for the animators to see, so we used those and the animators then drew the Enterprise.

There has been much debate over whether the cast recorded their parts together or separately, could you clarify this for us?
Yes. The cast did record most of the time together and as an ensemble. We tried to record them together as much as possible, because we felt that it would give us a better show. You know that they never did much voice over work before, and it was sometimes difficult for them to do their parts separately. Sometimes for various reasons, we had to record someone separate or use a tape, but most of the time they all recorded together. I saw that they really enjoyed coming back and working together, and it showed when they were all together in the studio.

Thanks, Lou... You shared some great information.

Glad to do it... anytime!

DUCKS IN FLUX

By Michael A. Naiman

What happens when a world-wide media conglomerate decides its once-hot properties are just plain too hot to handle?

Intro-DUCK-tion

During the last few decades our country has made great strides. It has become more sensitive to the feelings of different groups and the way they are characterized in popular literature. Today, "Political Correctness" is the buzzword and especially applies to the Multi-Cultural Agenda, and rightly so. Being culturally and ethnically polite for its own sake is the new etiquette. Corporations that are very image-conscious try not to offend their clients for obvious reasons related to profits. After all, why purposely offend certain populations that are good customers? Like any other culture-conscious business/media, comic book publishers, large or small, are not exempt from today's politically correct "rules" of the marketplace.

Which brings us to one of my favorite areas of comic book research... Disney ducks. Towards the late '50s and early '60s, anti-defamation societies and minority protection groups were gaining in membership and also achieving political and economic power. Sensitive to these events, Disney began to modify its previously published stories so that no group would be offended by what were originally broad characterizations intended only to amuse. The following is an examination of several examples of this "historical revisionism" and a look at how America's favorite family-oriented publisher/entertainment group, the Walt Disney Company, has modified its previously published comic books (as well as some of today's new books) so as to be politically correct...

Politically Correct African Americans

March Of Comics #20 "In Darkest Africa" (August, 1949) and *Four- Color* #238 "Voodoo Hoodoo" (August, 1949) are both solid examples of how Barks' native characterizations have been toned down for today's audiences. Gone are the black stereotypes with native facial features along with any dialect that would offend today's readership. A prime example of this kind of editing can be found when a comparison is made between the original *March Of Comics* #20 and the reprint from *Donald Duck Adventures* #29 (October, 1992). The natives' facial characteristics, references to savages, and an entire panel inferring cannibalism (which has since

HOLD STILL A SECOND, YOU GLORIFIED MOTH! I'M GETTING TIRED!
WHILE DONALD CHASES THE BUTTERFLY, PROF. McFIENDY MAKES A DEAL WITH SOME VERY ROUGH SAVAGES!
NOW, YOU GENTS UNDERSTAND— FOR TWO FALSE TEETH YOU'RE TO CAPTURE THESE FAT JUICY LITTLE BOYS AND HOLD THEM UNTIL I TELL YOU TO LET THEM GO!
YA! AND IF YOU NO TELL US BY MOONRISE, WE EATUM! YUM! YUM!
THAT SMART-ALECK DONALD DUCK BETTER CATCH THAT BUTTERFLY — AND SOON!

WHILE DONALD CHASES THE BUTTERFLY PROF. McFIENDY MAKES A DEAL WITH SOME VERY ROUGH NATIVES
NOW, YOU GENTS UNDERSTAND— FOR TWO CONFEDERATE DOLLARS YOU'RE TO CAPTURE THESE LITTLE BOYS AND HOLD THEM UNTIL I TELL YOU TO LET THEM GO!
THAT SMART-ALECK DONALD DUCK BETTER CATCH THAT BUTTERFLY — AND SOON!

NO, NO NATIVES!
The African tribesmen of another era (top) get a makeover and a smaller part in a recent edition (bottom)

All art, characters, and character names are © Walt Disney Productions 1995.

been deleted from the story) have been altered to achieve today's "politically correct" sensibilities.

"Voodoo Hoodoo" experienced a major overhaul of the native characters as well as the "softening" of the Bombie the Zombie figure. Gone from Bombie are the vacant zombie eyes that were planned and, instead, lidded eyes with pupils were added to the final design. The native black stereotypes were changed by giving them dog noses (like the rest of the non-duck characters), removing the sharpened teeth, modifying the dialogue, and eliminating excessive earrings and exaggerated lips. Until its reprinting in *Gladstone Comic Album* #16 (1989), this unique story virtually disappeared from the Disney reprint roster because of the outrageous stereotypes that were utilized.

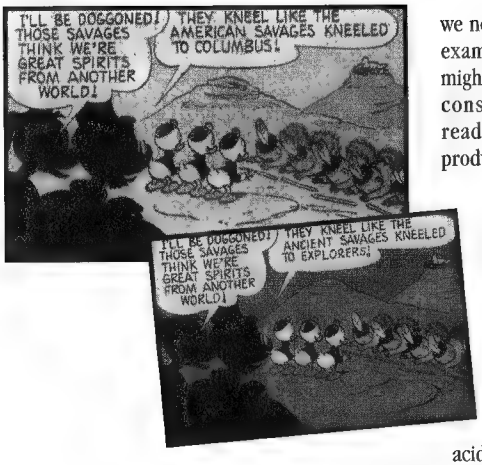
Politically Correct Native Americans

Traveling from the Dark Continent and journeying to the New World, let's examine how other native peoples have been portrayed. Barks' "Island in the Sky" in *Uncle Scrooge* #29 (March/May, 1960) has Uncle Scrooge, Donald, and the nephews off to find a new hiding place for Scrooge's fortune. They locate an asteroid which looks secure but, unfortunately, it seems to occupied by "Indians" complete with feathers in their heads and foliage loincloths. Their original encounter on page 11 panel 4 is an excellent example of careful re-editing. In *Walt Disney's Uncle Scrooge* #268 (July, 1992) the text has been altered to become less offensive by today's standards. In addition, the natives' skin color has been changed from flesh to blue in an attempt to make them seem more "alien." Instead of referring to them as "Asteroid Apaches" they are now called "Asteroid Aliens." Oddly enough, when this story was reprinted in *Uncle Scrooge* #143 (August, 1977) none of these changes had occurred.

As we follow the well-traveled PC trail through the forest of revisionism,

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE!
Looks like the term "lawsy" is a no-no in the modern era. This left over slave terminology from the antebellum South can now be officially described as "expletive deleted!"

BUT WE MUST BE CAUTIOUS, SWANA! THE VOODOO VILLAGERS MUST BE SURPRISED! IF THEY SEE US FIRST— OH, LAWSY! LAWSY!
BUT WE MUST BE CAUTIOUS, SWANA! THE VOODOO VILLAGERS MUST BE SURPRISED! IF THEY SEE US FIRST— WE ARE DONE FOR!


I'LL BE DOGGONED! THOSE SAVAGES THINK WE'RE GREAT SPIRITS FROM ANOTHER WORLD!
THEY KNEEL LIKE THE AMERICAN SAVAGES KNEELED TO COLUMBUS!
I'LL BE DOGGONED! THOSE SAVAGES THINK WE'RE GREAT SPIRITS FROM ANOTHER WORLD!
THEY KNEEL LIKE THE ANCIENT SAVAGES KNEELED TO EXPLORERS!

ALIEN AMERICANS
At Disney's insistence, Native Americans were redrawn as other-worlders to avoid ruffling feathers

THE PRISONER
Tied up in the editorial decision making process, "War of the Wendigo" remains unavailable to North American readers. (below)

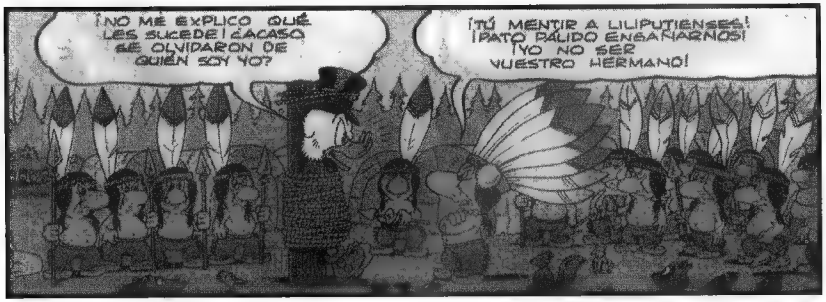
we now track down a modern-day example of "correctness" that might never be published for the consumption of the American readership. In 1993 Don Rosa produced a 28-page story entitled "War of the Wendigo" featuring Barks' Peeweegah Indians (whose original appearance was in *Uncle Scrooge* #18 (June/August, 1957). Uncle Scrooge, Donald, and the boys are involved in a story about the environmental issues of industrial pollution and acid rain.

Rosa related the story as follows... "When Gladstone tried to put the "War of the Wendigo" on their schedule, the Disney organization decided that it was not politically correct to do stories with Indians in them any longer, regardless of the fact that they were the heroes. It wasn't like the people at Disney read the story and decided not to use it, they just didn't want stories with Indians."

"About a year later, Gladstone resubmitted the story to the Disney editors. Disney came back with the demand that the Indians be modified to remove all their feathers, change the skin tone to blue or green, and turn them into some type of forest elves, and at the same time change all of their dialogue (which was in the Longfellow 8-beats to the line rhythm) so that they would not be mistaken for Indians, period. Well, that was something that I just wouldn't do. If you want to see that story you'll just have to somehow obtain a foreign edition." (Author's note- "War of the Wendigo" was published in Europe in November, 1991.) In June of 1995, Disney will be releasing its newest full-length cartoon "Pocahontus". It awaits to be seen how "correct and accurate" the representations of the Native American Powhatan tribe will be.

Politically Correct Violence

The Disney editors have always been very careful when it comes to depicting violence in their comic books. With the abundance of gun-toting vigilante superheroes crowding the racks, Disney takes extra precautions to avoid the representation of its characters utilizing guns in a direct physical attack. A current example of this sensitivity occurs in *Walt Disney's Uncle Scrooge* #287 (August, 1994). Chapter #3 of The Life and Times of Scrooge McDuck, entitled "The Buckaroo of the Badlands", has the young Scrooge seeking his fortune in the Wild West. On page 2 panels 7 and 8, the American printing has deleted the hold-up man's gun and substituted a pointing finger. In panel 9, the gun is pointing away from Scrooge's head (note the redrawing of Scrooge's bill), yet in the European version the gun is jammed into Scrooge's face. Finally, on page 3 panel 1, the desperado once again is shoving a gun into Scrooge's beak while the American version once again has him waving a "threatening" and "loaded" finger in Scrooge's face.


¡NO ME EXPLICO QUÉ LES SUCEDE! ¿ACASO SE OLVIDARON DE QUIÉN SOY YO?
¡TÚ MENTIR A LILIPUTIENSES! ¡PATO PÁLIDO ENGAÑARNOS! ¡YO NO SER VUESTRO HERMANO!

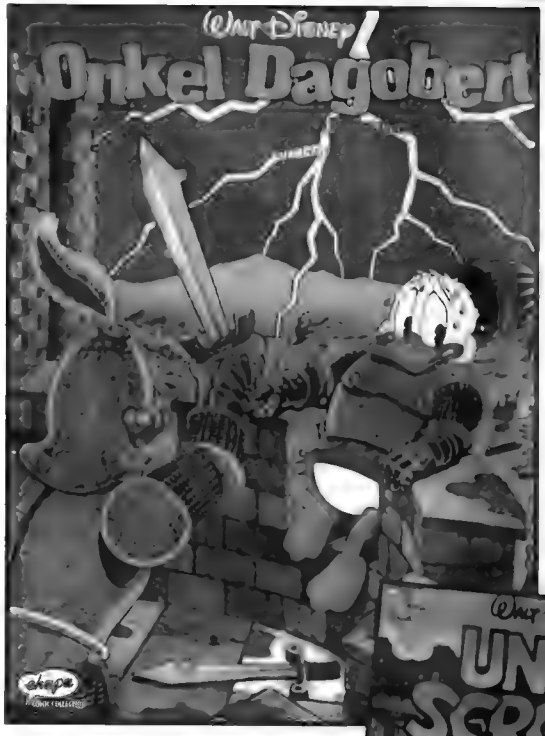
When the cover for *Walt Disney's Uncle Scrooge* #289 (December, 1994) was originally submitted to Disney, the knight had his sword held over his head ready to smite our hero. The Disney editors had approved the finished pencil version of this cover which ultimately ended up being used for the German edition of the saga published by Ehapa (December, 1994). Because of the "portrait" that is placed on the left hand side of the American editions, the sword would have been completely covered. Rosa redrew the cover repositioning the sword at Scrooge's throat. Apparently the Vigilance for Unnecessary Violence Editorial Committee missed this and never saw the cover before it went to press! Ironically, this "violent" version made it to the racks!

QUACK-clusion

Much of Carl Barks' Dell/Western Publishing work had an edge of realism to it that set it apart from the run-of-the-mill "funny-animal/wacky-adventure" story. Many of his characterizations and landscapes were inspired by the pages of the *National Geographic*, so, it is no wonder that the African, Arabian, and Asian-Pacific characters that were used actually were caricatures of real people.

In today's market, however, it is logical to assume that the editorial directors would not want to expose younger readers to multicultural elements which are exaggerated and possibly frightening misrepresentations of primitive peoples. It seems likely that this is a major factor contributing to the recent revisions and alterations to art and dialogue creating "two-version" stories.

And for comic book hobbyists, these two-version duck stories are a wonderful and historically interesting area of focus. For adventurous (and patient) collectors, seeking out and reading the originals and then comparing them to the reprint provides a unique perspective on where we've been, where we might be going, and how much of the journey has been "Politically Correct!" Happy hunting... ■



IN THE TEETH, YOU VILLAINS! In the old days Scrooge got the barrel... today he gets the finger.

DOUBLE-EDGE SWORD On the German edition the sword points up... in the American edition the sword points directly at Scrooge's throat.

Special thanks to Don Rosa, Dave Grisez, and Tim Collins for providing reference material.

Oddball Archie Part II

A WALK ON THE WEIRD SIDE OF RIVERDALE!

(Continued from *Comic Book Marketplace* #23.) To the uninitiated, the world depicted in Archie comic books typifies a middle-class normalcy unseen aside from *Leave It To Beaver* reruns. But, as we saw in the last issue of CBM, something weird was always happening in Riverdale, or at least it certainly seems that way in retrospect. Let's take a look at some more of these Oddball Archie items...

By Scott Shaw!

THE CHRISTIAN ARCHIE

In 1973, an unusual new line of Archie comics began to appear in Christian bookstores. Published under the Spire Christian Comics imprint by the Fleming H. Revell Company, these books were officially licensed by Archie Enterprises Inc. To quote a brochure for the comics, "Spire Christian Comics present God's truth in a graphic, contemporary way!" Archie-related Spire titles included *Archie and Big Ethel, Archie and Mr. Weatherbee, Archie Gets A Job, Archie's Car, Archie's Clean Slate, Archie's Date Book, Archie's Family Album, Archie's Festival, Archie's Love Scene, Archie's One Way, Archie's Parables, Archie's Roller Coaster, Archie's Something Else, Archie's Sonshine, Archie's Sports Scene, Archie's World,* and *Jughead's Soul Food.* Spire also published a comic book adaptation of *The Cross and The Switchblade*, as well as titles about such famous Christians as country singer Johnny Cash, football coach Tom Landry, gospel singer Andrae Crouch, and Watergate criminal Chuck Coulson... as well as what is possibly the world's first Christian funny animal, *Barney Bear*!

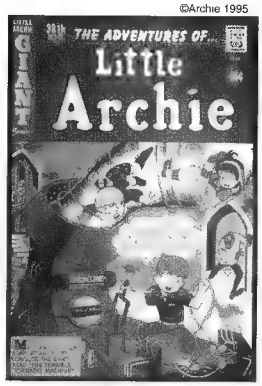
These books were mostly written and drawn by "born-again" cartoonist Al Hartley, who had been a regular Archie artist for years, as well as having drawn, of all things, a mythological god, namely Thor the God of Thunder, in a story or two for Marvel's *Journey Into Mystery*! In the aforementioned brochure, Al offers this personal statement of intent:

"Only Christ can change the world our children are growing up in! And first he changes people! I pray over every book I do in the Spire Christian Comic series — that it will clearly tell of God's love and grace — that those who read these books will know Christ as Lord of their lives! And I thank God for all who buy these comics and use them with imagination and faith — for His sake!"

Not being a Christian, I'm probably not well-qualified to judge these books, but speaking as a cartoonist, they represent some of the best work of Al Hartley's career. Whatever his inspiration, he put a lot of time and care into these pages, and it certainly shows.

However, I can't help but feel uneasy to see iconic cartoon characters such as Archie and Jughead espousing a particular religious doctrine. (Can you imagine a Buddhist Mickey Mouse, a Hindu Woody Woodpecker, or a Jewish George Jetson? The mind boggles...at least, mine does!)

Even weirder, Reggie and Veronica are negatively portrayed, not because they're sneaky or spoiled, but because they're non-believers! In any event, the Spire Archie comics lasted only a few years, but are now enjoying an ever-lasting afterlife in the "quarter boxes" of comic shops.



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To go to the opposite extreme (theologically speaking), *Chilling Adventures In Sorcery As Told By Sabrina* (2 issues, 1972) is one of Archie's most remarkably bizarre comic books of all time. These featured somewhat run-of-the-mill monster/horror/mystery stories fairly typical of many comic books over the years... but with two unbelievably wacky differences!

First off, rather than featuring the typical Crypt Keeper-type horror-host, these terror-tales were narrated by none other than Riverdale's own version of Samantha Stevens: cute, ash-blonde Sabrina, the Teen-age Witch! Secondly, these stories, although featuring the murderous mayhem usually associated with this genre of comic book, were illustrated in the distinctive style usually reserved for Archie's high school high jinx!

I can assure you, the overall effect is one of the weirdest ever experienced, and conjures up a new, utterly unique genre of comic books — Wholesome Horror! These books also had something of a Marvel Comics influence, as evidenced by their cover layouts featuring arrow-blurbs pointing to other blurbs and copy-boxes. And check out that monstrous insect on the cover of #2; darned if it doesn't closely resemble "Grottuu, King of the Giant Ants" from *Marvel's Strange Tales Annual* #1! This title continued under Archie's Red Circle imprint, unfortunately minus Sabrina.

The WORLD OF LITTLE ARCHIE

Little Archie (180 issues, 1956-1983) was probably created in reaction to the phenomenal success of Hank Ketcham's daily panel *Dennis the Menace*. Originally conceived as the adventures of Archie and his friends when they were kids, the series eventually depicted its cast as existing in the same contemporary time period as their teen-age counterparts (though they never actually met.)

But as I mentioned in the first half of this article, it was Bob Bolling's alarmingly frequent use of extraordinary elements that initially attracted my boyhood attention to *Little Archie* back in the 1950s. There, our red-haired hero met up with a never-ending succession of dinosaurs, aliens, sea monsters and bad guys of all kinds. Chief among these villains was Bolling's creation, Mad Doctor Doom. Aided by his goonish sidekick Chester, Doom was a green-skinned schemer with a nose like a can-opener; in fact, he somewhat resembled "Peter Pain" from the old toothpaste ads. Uncannily like a certain Herr Doktor Victor Von Doom across town at "The House of Ideas", *Little Archie's* Doc Doom also could travel to the past and future in his Time Taxi.

Which Doom came first? It's hard to say, but I seriously doubt that this was a case of plagiarism; it's probably similar to the better-known parallel concepts of DC's Doom Patrol and Marvel's X-Men, pure coincidence.

ADVENTURES OF LITTLE ARCHIE
Mad Dr. Doom again attempts to conquer the Earth... in "TheTerrible Tornado Machine".

JUGHEAD'S FANTASY
One of the short-run esoteric Archie titles, *Jughead's Fantasy* continues to be in high demand.

Odd as these elements may be, *Little Archie* would be equally noteworthy even without them. Simply put, it remains one of the greatest "kid" comic book series of all time, right up there with John Stanley's *Little Lulu* and Sheldon Mayer's *Sugar and Spike*. Creator/writer/cartoonist Bob Bolling created a Riverdale unseen in any other Archie title; here, it evoked everything wonderful about a childhood spent growing up in a small town. Bolling not only had (and still has, as is evident in the occasional script he still writes for the Archie titles) a gift for authentic-sounding kids' dialog (despite an occasional over-reliance on puns), he also was/is a masterfully brilliant draftsman. An outdoorsman as well as cartoonist, Bolling never missed an opportunity to depict wildlife and woodsy locales in his *Little Archie* storylines. He also had the unusual ability to draw these cartoony characters in, if the story called for it, distinctively dramatic situations. All in all, I feel that his work on *Little Archie* favorably compares with Carl Barks'

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RECENT ARCHIE EXPERIMENTS

Time Police and Faculty Funnies?

More recent examples of editorial experimentation in Archie comics include: *Jughead's Pal Hot Dog* (5 issues, 1990) turned Juggy's canine companion into a bonified funny-animal pooch. These clever stories, mostly illustrated by Nate Butler, depicted Hot Dog's "secret life" as a galaxy-traveling adventurer and hero to dogs everywhere.

Archie 3000 (15 issues, 1989-1991) was to "Archie One" what the Jetsons are to the Flintstones. This comic book featured Archie's gang (actually, their descendants) up to their usual tricks, but with a science-fictional twist, taking place more than one thousand years in the future.

Archie's R/C Racers (10 issues, 1989-1991) featured Archie and his pals competing in a global race conducted with radio controlled toy race cars! (I didn't quite understand the concept then... and I still don't!)

Jughead's Time Police (6 issues, 1990-1991) featured the Crowned One as a pivotal member of a chronal law enforcement team. I'd bet the success of *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* had something to do with this one.

Jughead's Diner (7 issues, 1990-1991) was a fairly clever but extremely strange series conceived by Bill Golligher and Dan Parent. It featured Jughead as proprietor of a wacky Pee-Wee's Playhouse-like diner. Essentially unconnected to "normal" Archie continuity, the stories usually revolved around Juggie foiling the schemes of his ruthless fast-food competition.

Faculty Funnies (5 issues, 1989-1990), featured "The Awesome Four," a team of unlikely super heroes in the tradition of Pureheart the Powerful. This crime fighting quartet (actually Mr. Weatherbee, Miss Grundy, Professor Flootsnoot and Svenson the janitor) were somehow gifted with superhuman powers — but their sagging physiques were less than competitive with comicdom's superheroic competition, and the title soon folded..

Archie Giant Series Magazine #587 ("The World of Archie") (1988) and 599 both featured the Explorers of the Unknown, which soon spun off into its own title (6 issues, 1990-1991. Obviously inspired by Jack Kirby's *Challengers of the Unknown* (DC), this series presented Archie and his gang as intrepid high-tech adventurers facing fantastic situations of Kirby-esque proportions.

Archie Meets The Punisher (Archie)/*The Punisher Meets Archie* (Marvel) #1 (1994), outstandingly written by Wolf and Byrd creator Batton Lash and drawn by John Buscema, Stan Goldberg, and Tom Palmer, was a surprisingly successful crossover that somehow presented both Archie and the Punisher as much more interesting characters than their own titles usually allow! Additionally, the crossover ended with an implied confrontation between Jughead and Wolverine!

Archie Giant Series Magazine (featuring "Pep Comics") #'s 601 and 624 both featured cover stories set at actual comic book conventions, including the San Diego Comic-Con. Members of the Con's organizing committee even made cameo appearances in the storylines.

achievements with Donald Duck, Uncle Scrooge and company. It's that good, and certainly merits serious examination!

Little Archie's "good ol' gang" included kid versions of Jughead, Betty, Veronica, Reggie, Moose, Dilton, and "Archie's picked-on pal," Li'l Ambrose, a character unseen in the "teen-age" version of Riverdale. Years ago, I suggested to Bob Bolling that perhaps the runty Ambrose never survived his childhood. He never answered this directly, but in a terrific montage drawing of the *Little Archie* cast he drew for me, Bob included a shot of a tombstone topped by a baseball hat bearing close resemblance to the one that Ambrose always wore. Bolling also created a recurring kid-nemesis for Archie's gang, the brutish "Fangs" Fogarty.

The first 84 issues of *Little Archie* were all giant-size issues. This format ate up pages at a furious rate, so Bob Bolling shared each issue with the prolific writer/cartoonist Dexter Taylor. Early in its run, the title was successful enough to be spun off into three other short-lived titles, *Little Archie in Animal Land* (4 issues, 1957-1958), *Little Archie Mystery* (2 issues, 1963) and *Little Ambrose* (1 issue, 1958,) all written and drawn by Bolling himself.

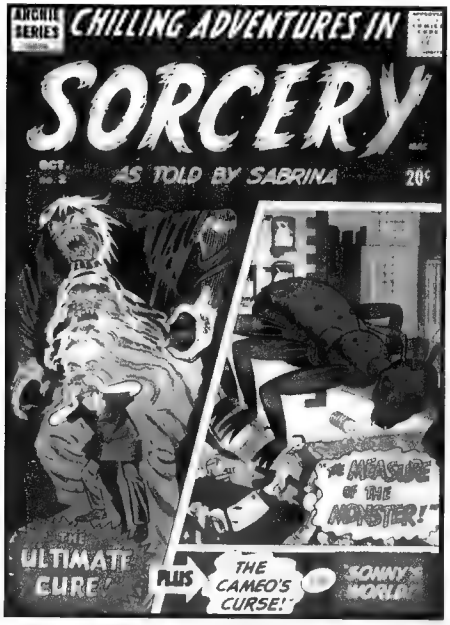
OTHER ODDBALL ARCHIE

Archie's Mechanics (3 issues, 1954-1955) was an strange attempt to inject some "infortainment" into an Archie title. This comic featured "how to" articles on the tune-up and repair of cars, stereos, and televisions, using Archie and his pals 'n' gals as demonstrators. (The only problem is, would you trust any supposedly practical information imparted by this group of adolescent goofballs? Considering their propensity for slapstick or worse, me neither.) The book also spotlighted the occasional over-optimistic "preview" of possible (if unlikely) inventions looming in the near future, such as the "atomic locomotive" mentioned on the cover of issue #1!

Jughead's Folly (one-shot, 1957) featured Jughead transformed into an Elvis Presley-like personality; supposedly, this is the first specific reference to Elvis ever to appear in comic books! (For more information, refer to the article on *Jughead's Folly* in a recent issue of Overstreet's *Golden Age and Silver Age Quarterly*.)

Jughead's Fantasy (#'s 1-3, 1960) starred Riverdale's hungriest teen-ager in escapist "what if" situations, from being a knight of King Arthur's Round Table to possessing the super-strength to become the unlikely star player on

Riverdale High's football team ("Juggie the Juggernaut", *Jughead's Fantasy* #3.) Oddly enough, not all of these stories were outright fantasies but occurred within the "real" world of Riverdale!



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Archie's Madhouse (66 issues, 1959-1969) was one of many comic books of the period to be obviously inspired by the rampant success of *MAD Magazine*. Like its forerunner, *Archie's Mad House* (later variously retitled *Madhouse* and *Madhous Ma-Ad Jokes*) specialized in contemporary humorous parodies of movies, television, and other popular culture, with Archie and his gang making occasional appearances to host or appear in an article. Funny monsters, aliens from outer space, super heroes, beatniks and hippies were also mainstays of this long-running comic.

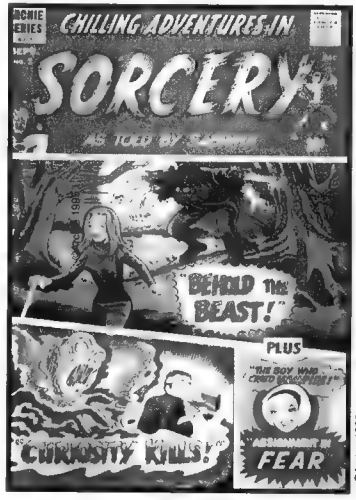
Tales Calculated to Drive You BATS (7 issues, 1961-1962, plus one Giant issue, 1966), was a spin-off of *Archie's Mad House*. It, too, was a MAD-inspired project, but its layouts and style were more reminiscent of a *Famous Monsters of Filmland*-type magazine somehow remade in the form of a color comic book.

Created by the classic writer/artist team of George Gladir and Orlando Busino (who drew the comic in a style resembling an unlikely but winning combination of the artistic styles of EC's Jack Davis and *Beetle Bailey's* Mort Walker), *BATS* remains a unique high point in the history of Archie Publishing. (Archie's "Boy Editor" Paul Castiglia wrote an excellent and detailed article about *BATS* for a recent issue of Overstreet's *Golden Age and Silver Age Quarterly*. Check it out for more specific information on *BATS*.)

"Archie One" was a semi-regular series appearing throughout the Archie line of comics for quite a few years. This depicted Archie and the Riverdale gang as prehistoric cavemen but with their recognizable personalities intact. This "Flintstones"-like concept first appeared in *Life With Archie* #71, March 1968.

"Betty Cooper, Betty Cooper," featured in *Betty and Me* (1976), was conceived as a take-off of Norman Lear's then-popular syndicated series "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman", in itself a parody of soap operas. Each of its dozen-or-so installments ended in a cliffhanger situation, leading directly into the next issue.

Ultimately, the true test of a comic character's greatness is in remaining fresh and interesting over a long period of publication. Obviously, it's a testament to Archie that he and Riverdale's other teen-age inhabitants have not only endured the years but have emerged relatively unscathed after all of these wacky Oddball incarnations, themes and approaches. Long live Archie Andrews, America's favorite — and oddest — teen-ager! ■



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CHILLING ADVENTURES IN SORCERY
Reminiscent of pre-hero Marvel (including the giant ant on the cover of the second issue), #1 and #2 are among the most sought after Archie books.

Facing Page
ARCHIE'S MECHANICS #1
Considered the rarest of the 1950s Archie titles, this first issue was "cursed" with a 15¢ cover price, ensuring few could afford it at the newsstands.

SCOTT SHAW! is the author/compiler of Oddball Comics, a boxed set of 36 collectors' cards of "the craziest comic books ever published" published by Kitchen Sink Press. He recently decided to stop collecting comic books in the year 2001 so he can tell people "I only collect Twentieth Century comic books." We'll just see about that!

BY STEPHEN H. GENTNER

terrific TERROR

in the golden age of comics, even a mild-mannered druggist could become a fighting nemesis of crime

The Black Terror, Standard/Nedor's star character, debuted in their flagship title *Exciting Comics* (#9, dated May) in 1941. "The Terror" as he was also known, was in reality Bob Benton. While experimenting with "formic ethers" in his profession as a pharmacist, Benton is overcome and wakes to the realization he has been transformed (ala Jay Garrick, The Flash). Tim Roland, Bob Benton's young assistant, gains Bob's confidence... and Presto! Bob turns Tim on, and into a duplicate hero of himself. The "Terror Twins" are born.

By the time the Terror arrived on the comic scene, all the really good jobs for alter-egos had been taken. Reporters, philanthropists, magnates, doctors, and millionaires were all in use. Consequently, meek and mild Bob Benton became... A DRUGGIST! (It was either that or a welder!)

strange brew

The whole "alter-ego" thing is kind of strange anyway. Writers had to come up with some sort of life for their heroes outside of their uniforms. Clark Kent was alerted to his cases at a newspaper office. All the millionaires and playboys had underlings to inform them about "the word on the street." Philanthropists usually got wind of potential crime at cocktail parties and charity fund-raisers, but not Bob Benton. He got his leads from people coming into his pharmacy! Poor Bob! He had to keep an ear out for those guys on aisle

#4 buying Vicks Vapo-Rub to get his next case! All this, mind you, while simultaneously filling Mrs. Arbogast's prescription for whooping-cough!

You've got to admit, Tim Roland's parents were incredibly tolerant of his long absences, chronic truancy, and continuing need to be with Bob Benton! Kindly, meek, and mild-minded Bob will turn you on to

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"formic ethers", dude! I should hasten to add that Bob Benton did have a girlfriend in the person of Jean Starr, the mayor's secretary. So, it was a harmless chemically reactive relationship Tim had with Bob! (And he got a nifty uniform, too!)

not a super man

I would characterize the Black Terror's powers as Superman- "lite." That is, he had impenetrable bullet-proof skin and was as strong as all get-out! Yet, the Terror had no enhanced visionary powers nor could he fly. (In all instances, Tim's powers were just scaled down equivalents.) No, the intriguing thing was that the Terror could be knocked-out by a blow to the back of the head! This method was used quite often to get the drop on him, which would set up all those exciting escape sequences! "Bullets bounce off him! Herculean strength! Boulders thrown asunder!!".... but "POP" on the back of the head... and he's out like a light!

Standard's confidence in the Black Terror's popularity was confirmed when he received his own

title commencing with *Black Terror* #1, Winter, 1942. The storylines and plots which put the Terror through his paces were at best ordinary, but no more so than many other comic characters published during that same time period. One must remember that a significant number of the best writers and artists had joined the Armed Forces for the duration. The replacement writers and artists for almost all the larger houses brought a noticeable downturn in quality. It is sobering, however, to realize that it took a World War to make Standard's interior art comparable to other publishers.

secret weapon

Cover art was a different story! The most striking and important reason for the success of the Black Terror (and Standard/Nedor comics as a whole) can be summed up in two words... Alex Schomburg. Timely comics was already enjoying great success with his work on their titles. Since Schomburg had already produced numerous incredible covers for other Standard pulps and periodicals, it was a natural step to use his work on their comic line. Schomburg's striking caricatures of Japanese, German Nazis, and Italian Fascists as they battled the Terror were nothing short of genius. Alex's signature ability to juggle proportion for graphic overstatement "wowed" the readers then, as it does now!

black and blues

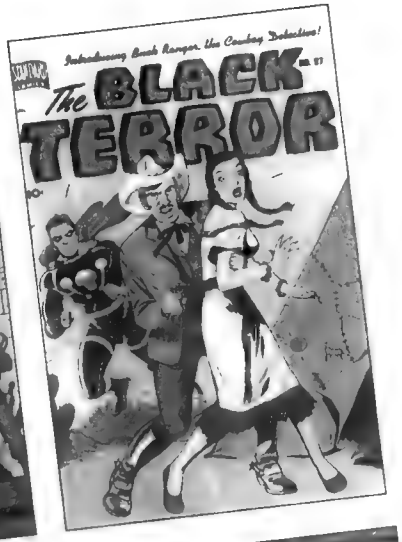
The AXIS barbarism visually communicated by Schomburg's propoganda covers are comic book legend. Consider such examples as injecting poison into candy-bars for European waifs, sawmill torture-traps, executions of bound American airmen, and flame-throwing P.O.W.'s. The Germans and Japanese had no defense against the comic-art propaganda barrage unleashed by Alex Schomburg! No wonder they lost the War!

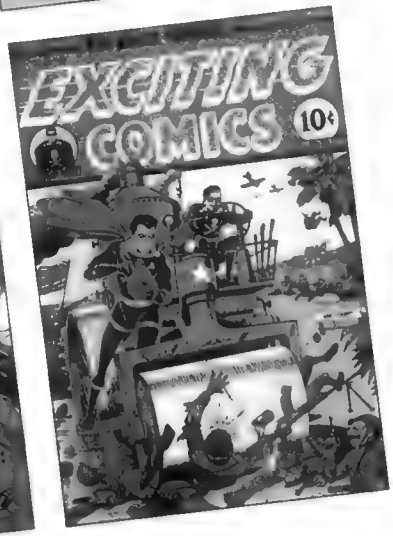
Yet Schomburg had problems with the Black Terror's number one attribute...his costume! It's difficult to draw solid black and make it look good, yet Schomburg's delicate edge embellishments, proportionality excellent concepts and the Terror's trademark "skull and bones" were perfectly executed. (The "skull and bones" were part of the costume Bob Benton designed, lifting that scary image from a poison bottle.) Many people, including me, feel the Black Terror's uniform is one of the most striking ever produced in the Golden Age. They

say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and Marvel's Punisher costume flatters itself in homage to the Terror. (I confess that I prefer the Terror's costume over the Punisher's, both artistically and stylistically.)

from guns to gals

The progression of cover content from *Black Terror* #1 in the dark early days of World War II, to the light "good girl" crime covers in the post-war period are a history lesson unto themselves. We watch the Terror shift from excoriating Nazis and Japanese to freeing a damsel in distress from a "transparent plastic" death! The title has many quaint idiosyncrasies. The Terror wears no mask on the cover of issue #4! Tim, who by the way never gets called anything else but Tim in costume or in civvies, is maskless on covers #3, #4, and #9! The interiors, though lacking, still had moments of fun with the Terror Twins on the trail of a villain once on a bicycle! You also get all the requisite brave-banter like, "From me to you", "Where are you going?", "Come to Poppa", etc.





unmined gold

Standard/Nedors contribution to the Golden Age of heroes in the form of the Black Terror will not soon be forgotten. Except for issue #1, Alex Schomburg produced all the covers up to the end with #27, June, 1949. And while Timely and D.C. comics of this era are going to the moon price-wise, the *Black Terror* title has only just been re-discovered! *Guide* prices for #1 in NM are only $725! The vast majority of the run *Guides* for under $100 in FN—Schomburg covers and all! May the "formic ethers" be with you 'til next time! ■

Black Terror's are amazingly inexpensive! The following is a list of the Black Terror issues and their latest Guide prices. Note that the GD price for most issues is less than $25 and the FN price is less than $100!!!

Issue	GD	FN	NM
#1	$121	$365	$850
#2	$52	$156	$365
#3	$41	$125	$290
#4	$34	$100	$235
#5	$34	$100	$235
#6-10	$25	$75	$175
#11-20	$20	$65	$150
#21	$24	$72	$165
#22	$24	$72	$165
#23	$21	$63	$145
#24	$22	$65	$150
#25-27	$21	$63	$145

CBM and Steve Gentner would like to thank Paul Graham at Technical Imaging Servicers (TIS) in Portland, Oregon for their outstanding graphics reproduction services.

The Multiple Origins of Sub-Mariner & the Human Torch

by Jon Berk

You Only

A survey in CBM #22 explored the rarity and desirability of certain Timely issues. Prominent among those were **Sub-Mariner Comics #32** and **Marvel Mystery #92**. Besides being the last of the run, these two issues are also special because they recount the origins of the Sub-Mariner (#32) and Human Torch (#92). Of real historical importance, the "re-tellings" in these rare volumes embellish and (to some extent) modify the original stories as they appeared in **Marvel Comics #1**. The following looks at and compares these "multiple origins" in the Timely mythos...

Three Origins Of The Sub-Mariner

Marvel Comics #1

As originally presented, Leonard McKenzie was leading a scientific expedition in the Antarctic in 1920. His blasting of ice was causing irreparable damage to a city of sub-mariners. An army was formed and Princess Fen was chosen to act as a spy because she most closely resembled the surface dwellers. Fen was instructed by the Emperor, her father, to find her "way into the hands of these white monsters, there to work your feminine wiles to our racial advantage".

Fen was found and befriended by Capt. McKenzie. They became fast friends, fell in love and married. However, she continued to send back secret information to her people. She reported that the surface dwellers were too powerful. Even before they could prepare their first counter-attack, a powerful blast destroyed their city and all but a handful of the sub-mariners.

The story advances 20 years. Princess Fen tells her son Namor, that his father is Capt. McKenzie, that it has taken twenty years to recover but it is now time to exact their revenge on the surface dwellers. That revenge will be inflicted through Namor who can live both on land and sea, "an ultra man of the deep", who can fly and has the strength of a thousand men.

Sub-Mariner Comics #32

Even though the title actually continued with the Atlas issues (#33-42, April, '54 to October, '55), *Sub-Mariner* #32 (June, 1949) was the final "Golden Age" issue of the title. This retold origin begins with Capt. McKenzie lost in an ice crevice, where he has fallen and broken his leg. After his ship leaves without him, Fen finds the fallen captain. McKenzie addresses her as "Princess Fen" (it is never explained how he knows that she is a princess, let alone part of a race of sub-mariners.) This account has no destruction of the submarine city as in *Marvel Comics* #1.

McKenzie is taken back to the city by soldiers who wish to kill him for the crimes that have been committed against the Sub-Mariners. Fen intervenes stating that this is a decision to be made by the Emperor. As opposed to the original story,

Live Thrice

Fen is equivocal about her love for McKenzie and states she only married him to learn about the plans of the "invaders".

Coming to grips with her emotions, Fen declares that she is to be re-married to McKenzie in accord with her traditions. Such marriage will make him a part of her race.

Her father, the Emperor, returns and is outraged by the marriage. Summoning Fen and McKenzie, he declares that McKenzie should be put to death for the crimes against the Sub-Mariners. Before he can act, an ice-breaker detonates an explosive charge to get through the ice. Shock waves are sent through the city. Fen and McKenzie escape in the confusion to the ice-breaker. Enraged by his daughter's betrayal, he sentences her to imprisonment for life.

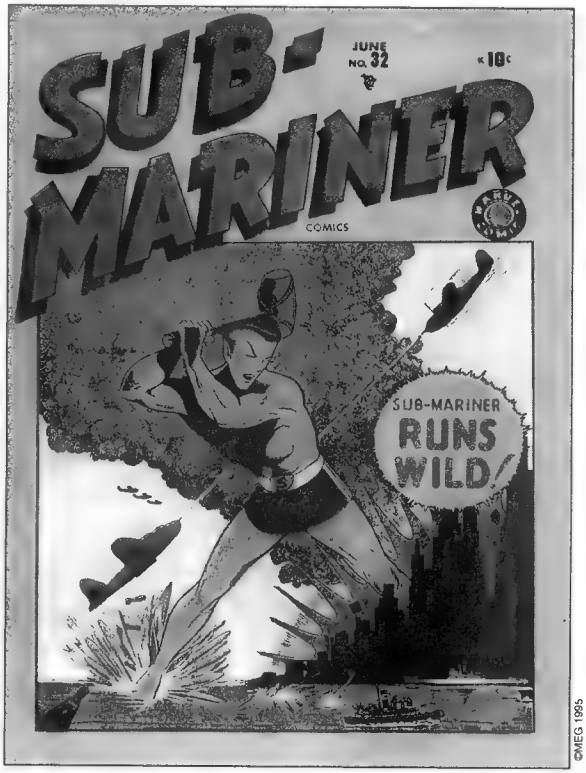
Several months go by when the news comes that Fen has had a son. Initially, the Emperor wishes to banish them to America, but changes his mind and sends Fen and the baby away, to return in ten years.

Returning in exactly ten years the Emperor declares the boy to be "Prince Namor, the Sub-Mariner". He is charged by his grandfather to dedicate his life to the "eternal war against acts of crime and evil".

The story moves forward another ten years when the city is again rocked by explosives from a passing ship. Namor sinks the ship and declares that it is time to travel north and commence his war against America.

Young Men Comics #24

A third abbreviated version of the Subby origin appears in *Young Men* #24 (December, 1953) a wonderful comic that contains short origins of Sub-Mariner, the Human Torch and Captain America that launched a short revival of these characters in the mid 1950s. In this story Namor is portrayed as the offspring of a goddess of a tribe of man-like mammals and the captain of an expedition to Antarctica. Mother and child were left behind after the expedition returned to America. Over the years the city of the



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SUBBY'S SECOND ORIGIN
Sub-Mariner #32, June 1949.

aquatic tribe was periodically damaged by explosions to the ice cap. Perceiving this as a direct assault on their domain, Namor's mother dispatches him to seek revenge on the surface dwellers.

Three Origins Of The Human Torch

Marvel Comics #1

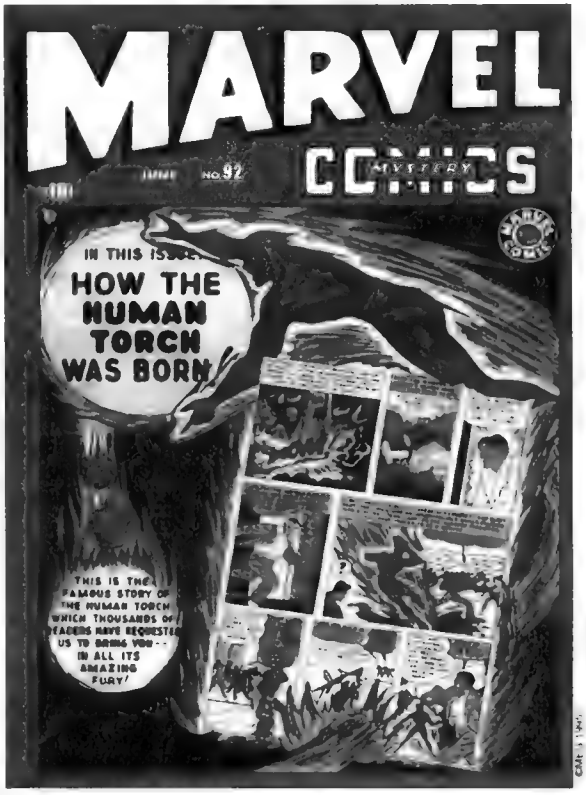
As the story opens, Professor Horton announces to the press that he has created a synthetic man. Unfortunately, there is a "problem" in that his creation bursts into flame when he contacts air. The press perceive this as a menace to society and maintain a campaign to have him destroyed.

Members of the scientific community, who inspect the android, agree. They hit upon the idea to encase him in a glass tomb and submerge it in a pool of concrete. Although Horton vows to find a solution to the flaming problem, his creature is soon forgotten.

One night a tremendous explosion occurs and the creature is released. Over time a small leak had occurred releasing the power of the flame. The Torch goes through town, causing havoc. The Torch is concerned about the fires he has started and submerges himself in a swimming pool to extinguish his flame. The pool is on the grounds of a gangster named Sardo who activates a glass cover (used in the winter) to trap the Torch. He decides to use the creature in an extortion racket.

The owner of a steel factory refuses to purchase "fire insurance" from Sardo. Sardo places the Torch, who is within a glass tube, in the steel factory. He breaks the tube and the Torch bursts into flame causing great destruction. The Torch reasons that Sardo is using him for crooked purposes and flies to Sardo's estate to have his revenge. Sardo has locked himself in a steel vault/laboratory where he unsuccessfully tries to destroy the Torch.

As fire rages uncontrollably through the estate, Professor Horton (inexplicably) appears and races into the burning building to remove a tank of nitrogen. The Torch suddenly appears and grabs the tank. As the tank melts and the gas is released, the Torch's flame is extinguished. Returning to the basement vault, the Torch is offered a tank of nitrogen by Sardo only if the Torch will release him. (Sardo, somehow, has reasoned that the nitrogen has accounted for the Torch's normal condition). He refuses and in the ensuing melee, Sardo is killed as he tries to destroy the Torch.


MARVEL
COMICS
MYSTERY
NO.92
IN THIS ISSUE:
HOW THE HUMAN TORCH WAS BORN
THIS IS THE FAMOUS STORY OF THE HUMAN TORCH WHICH THOUSANDS OF READERS HAVE REQUESTED US TO BRING YOU-- IN ALL ITS AMAZING FURY!

TORCH'S SECOND ORIGIN
Marvel Mystery Comics #92, June 1949.

Experimenting with the tank of nitrogen, the Torch finds he finally can control his flame without the use of the gas. The Torch is brought to court for his perceived crimes. Explaining his actions to the judge, the Torch is released into the custody of Professor Horton, who sees that he can make millions from the Torch now that he can control his flame. Repulsed by this greed, the Torch vows never to be used for selfish gain or crime by anyone. With that he leaves Horton's home to pursue further adventures.

Marvel Mystery Comics #92

In the final issue of this title, Professor Horton is portrayed a bit more favorably. The Torch has not seen Professor Horton for ten years. (This absence of a visit for so long makes sense in view of the ending of the original account. However, this long absence makes little sense in view of the amended original story as recounted below). Coming to the home of his creator, as Horton lies on his deathbed, the Torch reminisces over his creation...

In this re-telling, fellow scientists are first called to his home to view the Torch and to see if they can help Horton control the

flame. Seeing Horton's creation as a menace to civilization, they release the story to the papers, portraying Horton as insane. Resenting this characterization, Horton invites members of the press to see the Torch. (This reverses the order of the original story). They too see the Torch as a threat.

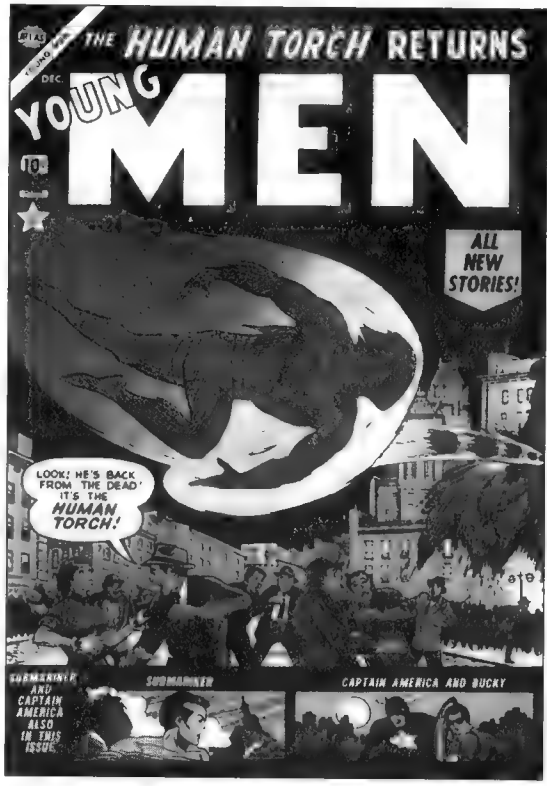
Spurned by the press, Horton works day and night on a solution to solve the flaming problem. Finally after months of failure, Horton collapses from exhaustion. He is convinced by his doctor to rest and give up on his quest. Admitting his failure, Horton encases the Torch in a pool of concrete.

As in the original tale, the Torch is released by an apparent leak of air on August 10, 1940. The story then follows the original until the Torch returns after causing chaos in the city. In the updated version, he returns to a pool at the home of Professor Horton who is approached by Sardo and threatened if he does not allow Sardo to use the Torch for extortion. After being beaten by Sardo's thugs, Horton reluctantly agrees.

Again the account follows the original with Sardo's extortion scheme refused by the owner of a factory and the Torch being released in that facility. Although a fire ensues, Horton, Sardo, and the latter's gang are outside as authorities come to put out the blaze. The Torch is sprayed by a chemical by the fire fighters. Horton is shot by Sardo. The Torch starts out in deadly pursuit of the gang causing their car to crash.

After subduing the crooks, the Torch is able to wish his flame off, wondering whether the chemical spray had anything to do with it. Being advised that Horton is seriously injured, Torch rushes to the professor's side and learns that Horton is paralyzed... bedridden for the rest of his life. The Torch takes the same pledge as in the original story (although for different reasons).

Returning to the present, the Torch is there as Horton is belatedly recognized by the scientific community for his contribution to science. Mere hours later, on December 28, 1948, as the Torch looks on, Horton dies.



SUBBY & TORCH ARE BORN AGAIN FOR THE 3RD TIME!
Young Men #24, December 1953.

Young Men #24

The brief synopsis of his origin in *Young Men* #24, has the Torch being able to control his flames immediately upon his creation. Recognizing immediately the special abilities the Torch has to combat evil in the world, Horton proclaims that the Human Torch will be the "Torch of Liberty".

Scarce Timely Last Issues...

As any seasoned collector will verify, both *Sub-Mariner* #32 and *Marvel Mystery* #92 are extremely scarce (as are many last issues). This, combined with increasing collector interest and demand, makes them quite hard to find in today's market.

But rarity and demand aside, both these modified origin story issues have critical historical and literary importance to the mythos of the Timely/Marvel universe. Although the Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner briefly resurfaced in the mid 1950s, *Sub-Mariner* #32 and *Marvel Mystery* #92, (both cover dated June 1949) signaled the end for Timely Comics and its decade-long superhero empire.

With lead time necessary for writing and drawing issues and placing them on the newsstands well in advance of the cover date one might say that, in a real sense, the Timely Golden era symbolically died along with Professor Horton on that cold December day... ■

Jon Berk is the president of the AACC and is a nationally known comicbook collector, researcher, and historian. Jon's first love is early Golden Age.

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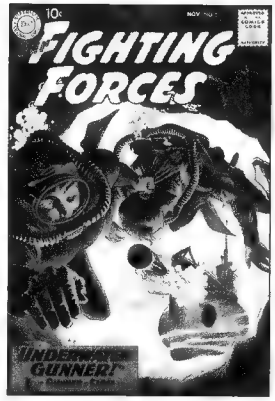
TOP SECRET

from the DC War Department...

Discovering An Unknown Classic

Savvy collectors of the "Big 5" DC war titles* are as familiar with their Silver classics (and the artists that drew them) as Sgt. York is with a turkey gobble. One of those artists is almost synonymous with the genre... the great Joe Kubert. Everybody knows that Kubert was instrumental (along with the legendary Robert Kanigher) in the development of Sgt. Rock, yet few would associate his talented pencil with the "other" famous 3-striper of W.W. II. (If the first character to come to mind was Sgt. Fury, traipse back in time about a half-decade to the "first house of ideas") The Sarge I refer to is none other than the latter half of "Gunner & Sarge" who, along with canine pal "Pooch," star in many of the Silver Age issues of *Our Fighting Forces*. Collectors may not be aware of the importance of Gunner & Sarge on the DC war timeline. The first appearance of the battling twosome predates Sgt. Rock by one month (three months if you consider *Our Army at War* #83 to be his first "quintessential" appearance... as most DC war collectors do).

Many hard-core war genre collectors are dogmatic purists in the sense that they only want issues with art by the artists most closely associated with the quintessential "look" or of the characters... and nobody else. Many want the great Jerry Grandenetti Gunner & Sarge stories... his incredible work often unknown to most hobbyists. Other DC war afficionados prefer Joe Kubert's version of the aforementioned duo.



BY MICK RABIN

And it's those in this second camp that have discovered an "unknown" classic they sometimes label a "key" and always describe as sensational. *Our Fighting Forces* #51 (November, 1959) proves once again that Kubert is a quiet giant of masterful illustration. Not only does *OFF* #51 showcase the first Kubert (teamed with Bob Haney) rendering of Gunner & Sarge, but it also contains some of the most superb, knock-em-dead pages (13 to be exact) ever published in a Big-5 DC war book. Andru and Esposito provide a solid back-up story as does the recognizably stylistic Jack Abel.

As if the above wasn't enough to qualify this Silver Age gem as a classic, consider the fact that *Our Fighting Forces* #51 just happens to sport the one and only Gunner & Sarge cover by none other than the brilliant Silver Age artist Russ Heath. Fans of Heath's Sea Devils should take a gander at this creme-de-la-creme of frogman covers, its dynamic and riveting underwater scene predating *Showcase* #27 by 9 months.

The first Kubert Gunner & Sarge, the only Heath Gunner & Sarge cover, fabulous interior pages, a scarce 1950's DC 10-center, and an unbelievably reasonable Guide value... all this adds up to a fantastic book that is a winner through and through. ■

**All American Men of War, G.I. Combat, Our Army at War, Our Fighting Forces,* and *Star Spangled War Stories* were the 5 most enduring titles comprising the universe of DC war.

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5	VF87	275.00
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Web-Spinner Spin-Offs

A number of Spider-Man items can be described as odd and few are just down-right bizarre. Although there are way too many to list in a single article, I've picked out a few that you might find of interest whether a Spider-Man collector, toy collector, premium collector, comic collector, or (like me) an everything collector! When Peter Parker crept onto the superhero scene in '61, no one could've imagined the variety, merchandising worth, or eventual collectible value of commercial items with the likeness of the world's most famous costumed hero!

1966

The first licensed article seems to be the 1966 Golden Record LP (SLP 186) which included the first exact reprint of *Spider-Man* #1. According to the latest *Overstreet Price Guide* (#25) it lists for $190 in NM condition with record.

In the gumball machine arena, a comic book was available at a turn of the wrist. It measured 1" x 1/2", contained 25 pages, original art with origin, and was titled "Spiders Are Usually Very Unpopular". (1) Hulk, Millie the Model, Nick Fury, Captain America and Thor made up the set of six. A vari-view plastic ring also populated the one penny bandits. A few other toys and games came out around the same time, but then for some reason "Spider-Stuff" wasn't produced for about nine years.

1975

But then in 1975 a wall of products exploded that hasn't stopped crawling yet. Starting with Hudson Chewable Multiple Vitamins (2), Spidey came in red and green in a single swinging vitamin form. It doesn't mention a flavor so I'm guessing the always-a-favorite chalk/grit taste was standard. These vitamin pills are in more demand than you may think because later production runs contained a free metal Spider-Man ring!

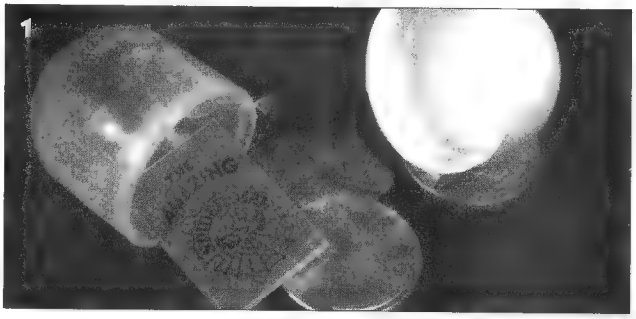
For the cold-blooded fans of the Lizard, you could again eat Spider-Man in the form of Spider-Man Freeze Icicles. Put out by the Catalog Shoppe Company, Heinz supplied a fruit concentrate to fill 6 icicles molds... two Spidey, two Hulk, and two Captain America.

1976

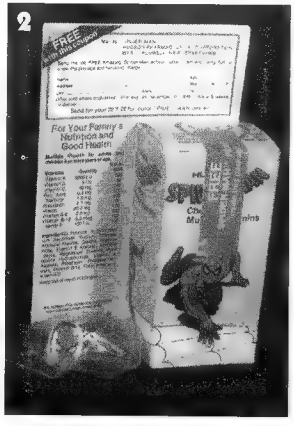
In 1976, the head of Spider-Man on a 2" diameter Peppermint Patty would look back at you from the candy section.

1978

1978 gave our calorie-conscious friends Topps Marvel Sugar-Free Bubble Gum Comics which contained the "enemy" sweetener Sorbitol. (3) These were 3" x 1"



sticks featuring Spider-Man/Doctor Doom, Thing/Thor, Hulk/Iron Man and Captain America/Torch. Each wrapper has an original color comic (4) on reverse with very witty two or three panels plus a Doctor Strange fortune. 34 different comics could be collected, but not very easily. I found only 4 different comics in a 36-count box. (By the way, the gum is still chewable after 17 years.)



1979

1979 brought sugar into our mouths in 5¢ Topps Marvel Comics Bubble Gum bricks. (5) Four colors went

Weird, bizarre, and sometimes collectible milestones in Spider-Man merchandising.

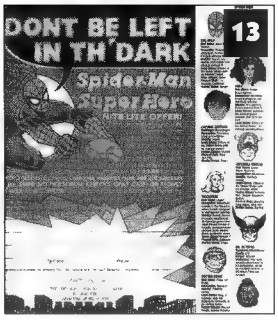
with four heroes—Spidey/green, Hulk/yellow, Captain America/red and Fantastic Four/blue. (6)Each piece contained a wax wrapper and a separate original color comic just like the 1978 "sugarless" comics. So far it looks like the comics were the same except this set had only 33. Once again, collecting them all is frustrating... I found only 11 different in a 96-count box!

1979

Also produced the same year... free stickers inside boxes of Cracker Jacks.

1979

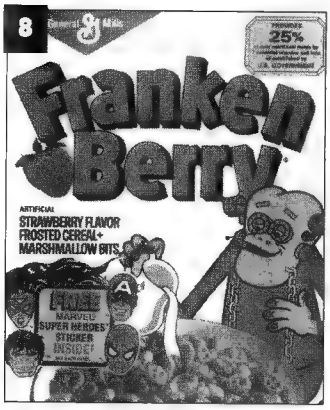
The last year of the Bronze Age brings us to my all time favorite item... The Amazing Spider-Man and Incredible Hulk TOILET PAPER. (7) Put out by Oh Dawn! Inc., this 2-ply facial quality tissue had 325 sheets which equals about 108 feet of Spidey and Hulk. The box brags that it contains an original story,

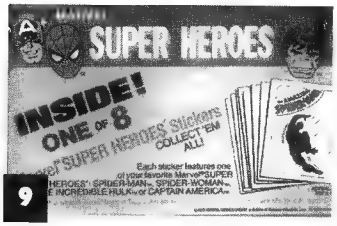


which it is, but ya gotta use 7 sheets to read it all (46 stories per roll). The ink is blue and I think the only condition you will find this item in will be MINT! If I had been the box designer, the promo catch phrase would have been "Help Spider-Man in His New Roll to Wipe Out Crime!"

1980

This year we moved to the top hole with the first Marvel cereal promotion. General Mills put out Trix, Lucky Charms, Cocoa Puffs, Count Chocula, BooBerry and Frankenberry (8 & 9)with a one-of-eight Marvel Super Heroes stickers free in each box. You had a chance to get Spider-Man, Spider-Woman, (10)Hulk, or Captain America. You could also send for a Spider-Man/Hulk PrestoMagiX dry transfers game by Paper Mate (the pen manufacturer). It's kinda weird to figure out which gender this transfer game was





aimed at as the child pictured looks like either a boy or a girl.

1989

Here's another ultra-cool milestone in the packaging of Spider-Man. In 1989 Marvel Superhero Adventure Cookies issue #1 was introduced by the geniuses at Street Kids Corp. (11) Not only was the bright yellow box a visual delight on the shelves with the superheroes coming out at you, Street kids went one step further... they gave away a plastic Spider-Man bank... shrunk-wrapped right on the front of the box (12)!

The cookies came in eight shapes of Spider-Man, She-Hulk, Hulk, Captain America, Doctor Octopus, Doctor Doom, Wolverine, and the Invisible Woman (who you could never find in the box!). After you finished the cookies, you could also order a Spider-Man Nite Lite (13)!

1993

1993 rolled around with American Home Food Product's Crunch'N'Munch Caramel Popcorn boxes (regular and peanuts). Both varieties had Spidey swinging at you if you were lucky enough to get a box containing a card featuring the web-head out of the six cards available. These were exclusive to Crunch'N'Munch and were initially in demand.

1994

In 1994 Nabisco slapped Spider-Man onto Ritz Cracker boxes with an offer for a one-of four "Supersnack Tins." I mean... who wants a tin? The promotion doesn't even suggest what you can use your Spider-Man, X-Men, Iron Man, or Fantastic Four tins for!

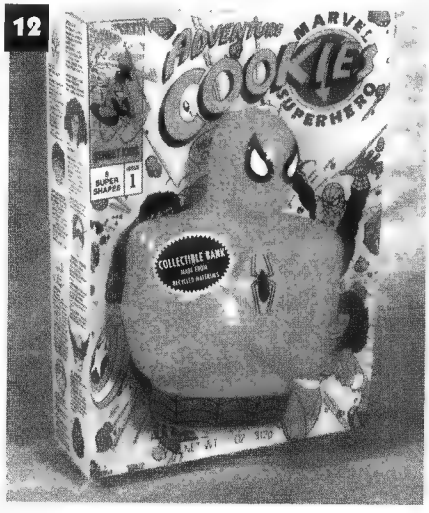
In contrast to the Ritz tins, Ralston was more mainstream in 1994. They put out Cookie Crisp (14) with exclusive animated trading cards that tied in with the animated TV show on the Fox network. On the side panel you could order six additional cards to really complete your set. You could also order the all-new *Spider-Man Magazine*!

Of course there's a lot more. I invite you to send a picture and description of your favorite Spider-Man collectible! Send them to: Duane's World, c/o Comic Book Marketplace, P. O. Box 180900, Coronado, CA 92178-0900.

Thanks for reading another installment of "Duane's World." See you in future issues of CBM! ■

All comic characters ©MEG 1995. All product names, characters, & logos are © their individual companies/corporations.

Special thanks to Jon Anderson, Chris Büdel, Andy Caro and Mick Rabin for their knowledge and loan of materials.



THE MATT SCHIFFMAN REPORT

Switching from Silver Age to Golden Age... Just isn't that easy!

Here we are again, heading into the convention season and finding dealers looking for inventory. Collectors are fueling the fire by also competing for these exact same books, and when these two competing forces meet, prices climb drastically. As we watch information channels grow more efficient and our collecting community become evermore close-knit, there are fewer and fewer secrets.

More than ever, we find collectors showing more and more allegiance to one particular genre, and not crossing over into other segments of comic collecting. Granted, this trend is all the more ingrained by price barriers. The cost of attempting to collect "it all" is prohibitive, therefor we find dealers, retailers and collectors specializing in one area.

Bronze Age

For example, in the early 70's books, a definite subculture of collecting is developing. A shakeout of books that collectors are finding to be relatively difficult to locate has developed. Of course, this must be taken with a grain of salt when we discuss "scarce" or "difficult" in the 1970's, but this ever increasing group of collectors ensure that most of these books never find the open market.

A pricing structure has evolved on its own and the ratio seems to be for every one dollar of value in the Guide for these particular books, the market is willing and able to spend two to three dollars. This is almost as irreverent as Golden Age prices, but not quite.

Leading the way, are books that seem to fit the "nostalgic 25 year rule." As my generation begins to covet books that have TV cartoon or live action kids shows, these wacky books are bringing multiples of guide. And, since most of these books were released under the Gold Key, Whitman, or Charlton banner, it makes them all that much more difficult to locate. Hong Kong Phooey (1975) #1 VF/NM $55.00; Star Trek #60 & #61 NM $85 for the pair; Top Cat (1970) VF++ $42; Pebbles and Bamm Bamm (1972) FN $35; Fat Albert (1974) VF/NM $12.

Silver Age

Again this month we find conflict. Those who can, and those who cannot. Both camps are equally adept, or have been, at selling Silver Age over the past four years. Yet now, some dealers are finding it difficult to move a majority of mid-grade Marvels and lower grade DCs... while others are carrying on at full steam! Much of this slowdown is being attributed to two factors. The first is a movement of collectors and investors to the Golden Age arena. The second is the number of collectors that have already filled a majority of their collections and/or wants.

In contrast there are those books that collectors never seem to get enough of. Sales of these high demand books can be described as brisk! For example Our Army at War #81 VG+ $620; Wonder Woman #105 GD $125; Showcase #4 App FN $5,200; I Spy NM $185; Iron Man #1 FN $155; Atom #7 VF/NM $200; Nick Fury #1 VF/NM $85; Avengers #4 VF- $400; Sgt Fury #13 FN $70; Four Color #930 VF/NM $85, Four Color #998 FN $45, Four Color #1202 VF+ $125.

The general consensus from most dealers is that Silver Age is only experiencing a momentary lull in those areas where it is slow, and will soon pick back up again. Are they being overly optimistic? Probably not. I've spoken with a number of primarily Silver Age collectors who haven't had the luck they hoped they would have finding great Golden Age when they switched over. In fact it didn't take long for them to express an interest in going back into Silver Age.

One long time hobbyist stated "a collector becomes accustomed to collecting (buying) books on a regular basis. The fun and thrill of the hunt was rewarded by having the possibility of completing that hunt... and finding that gorgeous book at a great price. Waiting for a particular Golden Age book to

continued on page 82

MARKET REPORTS

BILL PONSETI
More Fun Comics
New Orleans, Louisiana

Major collection purchased – hello again, everyone! What a find! As I'm sure that most of you already know, during the last month I have had the great pleasure of assisting in the un-earthing of one heck of a lot of Golden Age. I'm not talking your run of the mill Golden Age find, I'm talking deep runs of all publishers! Yes, the rumors are true, we have acquired one of the largest collections of Golden Age comics ever sold onto the market.

About three months ago I began the arduous task of negotiating for the collection and patience and persistence prevailed. My partner Joel Welker and I were joined by several friends and/or comic aficionados in investing funds to acquire the collection. Namely, Jack Mallette, Ken Stribling, Nick Kronfeld, Bruce Spizer, Carl Bourgeois, and Douglas Strachan. This was however, a labor of love. Love of comics that is.

The collection consisted of approximately 2200 comics from mostly 1939 through 1945. All major titles were represented, as were all major and most minor publishers. The collection was highlighted by a complete run of Fiction House, a near complete run of Fawcett, a deep run of DC, and many Timely, MLJ, Fox, Centaur, Quality, Nedor etc.

One of the most striking things about the books as a whole was the uniformity of page quality, WHITE. In many cases BONE WHITE pages. Also, the colors of the covers were uniformly rich and vibrant. While the overall grade for the collection is probably FN+— hundreds of issues were absolutely stunning!

BRUCE ELLSWORTH

Sante Fe, New Mexico

Greetings from New Mexico. The Golden Age frenzy has hit and almost everything is selling.

DC recent Sales: All-American #24 FN+ $9500; Batman #20 FN $450; Flash Comics #27 FN $575; Sensation #20 FN+ $200.

Fox titles are on the upswing as well. Sales of Mystery Men and Wonder World Comics from the Golden Age and Phantom Lady, Zago and Zoot Comics from the '50s sellout as fast as I get them. I have heard of 4x Guide for Phantom Lady #17. Whew! Recent sales: Mystery Men #2-#10 at 1.75x Guide; Wonder World #3-#5 2x Guide ; Zoot #14 VF+ $400. All were in VF or better with white pages.

Other esoteric titles with L.B. Cole covers are also hangin' ten here. Recent Sales: Terrors of the Jungle #6, #18, #19, #20, all sold for $8000 (2x Guide). Of course the new Guide will probably reflect a definite rise, probably the largest rise in recent history of most Golden Age books, especially Good Girl art books from the 50's. See ya next time!

Motor City Con – we had the great pleasure of debuting a large portion of the collection at Michael Goldman's Motor City Con in Detroit Michigan recently. Any of you out there who have not attended the Motor City show owe it to yourselves to go. Mike has done an amazing job promoting the con. Hats off to ya Mike!

There was a lot of excitement on the part of both dealers and collectors upon seeing the books. It is not often that we get to see these runs in this level of completeness and quality. Many books that are rarely ever seen or offered for sale were quickly snapped up. If there was any doubt about the legitimacy of the Golden Age market before Motor City, it has been erased, at least in our minds.

The following is a partial list of sales we have realized in the first week of offering a portion of the collection. (Note: no Timely or Fawcett comics have been offered yet.)

Green Mask Comics #1 App. FN+ $600; Action Comics #6 FR $465, #11 VG- $900, #12 App. FN+ $1600, #13 VG $1100, #23 GD $900, #31 VG/FN $300, #52 FN+ $440; Adventure Comics #41 GD/VG $810, #42 FR $230, #43 VG $605, #44 VG+ $1260, #45 GD- $2700, #47 VG $900, #48 App. FN $2500, #49 VG+ $500, #50 FN $675, #51 VG $540, #52 VG $360, #53 VG- $315, #54 FR $100, #55 VG $365, #56 FN/VF $900, #57 VG+ $4000, #58 VG $365, #600 FR $180, #61 VG- $2700, #62 FN $540, #63 FN+ $720, #64 FN $510, #65 VG+ $390, #66 VG- $390, #67 VG $300, #69 FN $615, #70 VG $335, #71 GD $155, #72 FN- $3150;

All-American Comics #17 FR/GD $1350, #18 GD+ $1260, #19 VG $3465, #20 VG $945, #21 VG+ $63, #26 VG $650; All Star Comics #8 GD/VG $3600, #11 VG $630, #12 VG+ $675, #13 FN- $810; Amazing Man #100 VG+ $315; America's Best #1 VF $1080; Batman #9 VG+ $850, #11 VG+ $900; Black Terror #1 VF- $945; Blue Ribbon #9 App. FN $450; Catman #1 FN+ $720; Comic Cavalcade #5 VF+ $1100; Detective Comics #300 FR/GD $785, #31 VG/FN $10,000, #32 GD- $900, #34 GD- $630, #35 GD- $1080, #36 VG+ $1350, #37 VG+ $13500, #38 VG $5700, #40 VG $1700; Flash Comics #7 VG+ $6300, #8 FN+ $900;

Green Lantern Comics #1 FN/VF $9900; Hit Comics #13 VF- $720; Jackpot Comics #1 GD+ $360; Jumbo Comics #1 FR+ $2520, #2 GD $1440, #3 VG+ $2700, #4 GD- $990, #5 VG- $14400, #6 GD+ $900, #7 GD $600, #8 FR- $270, #9 GD $720; More Fun Comics #55 GD $1800, $56 GD- $450, #70 VF 1440, #71 VF- $3660, #75 VF+ $1530, #84 NM- $1365; Mystery Men #1 VF $6500; NY World's Fair 1939 GD $2530; Phantom Lady #13 VF- $1620, #17 FN+ $2700; Planet Comics #1 VG+ $2160, #2 VG+ $1400, #3 FN+ $1100, #4 FN/VF $1195; Top Notch Comics #11 VF (SF Copy) $700; Weird Comics #1 GD+ $450, and many, many others!

Some other books of interest in the collection are All-American Comics #16; All-Star #3; Wonder Woman #1; Sensation Comics #1, Detective Comics #33, Jungle Comics #1; Big All-American #1; Comic Cavalcade #1; Superman #2-16, plus many others.

Well, until next time, hope to see you in San Diego!

GREG PHARIS

San Diego Comics & Collectibles

San Diego, CA

Well, there may be a lot of shake up with the new issue market lately, but the Golden Age and Silver Age market is going "gang busters" (if you'll excuse the pun). As overall new issue sales have been declining, we have had a huge increase in interest and sales of Golden Age and Silver Age comics here... especially Silver Age. All grades have been attracting buyers with low grades getting the lion's share of attention.

A number of local shops have informed me that we not only have the best selection of Silver Age in our area, but that we have it all! This could explain our sudden increase in sales during this period of new comic sales decline. Some notable sales are listed below:

Golden Age Sales (Consignment) - Captain America #10 FN- $900; All Select #11 VF $500.

Silver Age Sales (Consignment) - Amazing Spiderman #14 VF $650, #14 FN $400, #23 VF+ $250, #28 VF+ 350, #101 VF+ $150; Avengers #1 VG+ $400, #3 FN $105; Fantastic Four #4 GD $77; Incredible Hulk #6 VG+ $600; Journey into Mystery #100 VF $70; Tales to Astonish #35 VG $275.

Other Sales -

House of Secrets #92 VF- $225; Conan #1 & #3 VF $200 (a package sale), #2 VG $20, Marvel Spotlight #2 VF+ $35; Green Lantern #84, #85 and #89 all VF for $60.

JOHN SNYDER
Diamond International
GalleriesTimonium, Maryland

The following is a sampling of sales from our Harvey Comics Catalog from 11/94-3/95:

a-b 3-D Dolly #1 NM $160; Alarming Adventures #1 NM (3 Copies) $50, #2 NM $80; Alarming Tales #2 NM (6 Copies) $80, #3 NM (5 Copies) $55, #4 NM (4 Copies) $55, #5 VF $$40, #6 NM (2 Copies) $45; Baby Huey & Papa #1 NM (2 Copies) $90; Baby Huey Duckland #3 NM $20, #6 NM $15, #9 NM $10; Baby Huey, The Baby Giant #12 NM $20, #14 FN/VF $9, #29 NM $9, #54 NM $10, #55 NM $10, #87 NM $10, #88 NM $10, #89 NM $10, #98 NM $5; Black Cat Mystery #36 NM $100, #45 FN/VF (3 Copies) $68 ea., #47 NM $70, #48 NM $70, #64 NM (2 Copies) $60 ea.; Black Cat Comics #7 NM $70, #21 NM $100; #33 VF $50, #45 FN/VF $68, #62 VF $29; Blast Off #1 NM $40, #1 VF $28; Blondie Comics #17 VF $13, #31 VF $7 #46 NM $15, #105 NM $9, #125 NM $9, #157 NM $10; Boys' Ranch #5 VF $81; Bunny #2 VF $15, #4 VF $15, #6 VF $10, #7 VF $10, #11 VF $10, #12 VF $15, #20 NM $12, #21 NM $12;

C Captain 3-D #1 VF $20, #1 NM $(6 Copies) $45 each; Casper #213 NM $4, #223 NM $4, #224 NM $4., #237 NM $4, #240 NM $3; Casper & Nightmare #7 NM (2 Copies) $15, #9 NM $15, #12 NM $10, #32 NM $9, #33 NM $9, #37 NM $9, #40 NM $9, #41 NM $9, #43 VF (2 Copies) $4; Casper & Wendy #1 NM $15; Casper Ghostland #8 NM $36, #14 NM $18, #19 NM $25; Casper Strange Ghost Stories #1 NM $12, #7 NM $5, #8 NM $125, #19 VF $52, #21 NM $60, #37 NM $45, #40 NM $45, #70 NM $30; Health Activity Book NM $10; Chamber Of Chills #10 FN/VF (2 Copies) $42, #12 NM (4 Copies) $60, #13 NM (8 Copies) $80, #14 VF (3 Copies) $40, #15 VF/NM (2 Copies) $72, #15 NM (2 Copies) $80, #16 VF $60, #16 NM $80, #17 VF (2 Copies) $57, #18 VF/NM 72, #18 NM (3 Copies) $80, #19 VF $60, #19 NM (2 Copies) $80, #20 VF $60, #20 NM (3 Copies) $80, #20 VF/NM $72, #21 VF (5 Copies) $57, #22 NM (3 Copies) $80, #22 VF $65, #23 VF $65, #23 NM (4 Copies) $80, #25 NM (3 Copies) $40, #26 NM (2 Copies) $40;

d Dagwood #101 NM $10, #102 NM $10, #103 NM $10, #104 NM $10, #105 NM $10, #106 NM $10, #107 NM $10, #108 NM $10, #109 NM $10, #110 NM $10, #133 NM $10, #135 NM $7, #136 NM (2 Copies) $10, #137 NM $10, #138 NM $10, #139 NM $10; Dagwood Splits The Atom NM (3 copies) $40 ea.; Devil Kids Starring Hot Stuff #1 NM $115, #12 NM $18, #17 NM $18, #25 NM $12, #41 NM $12, #42 NM $12, #45 NM $12, #50 NM $10, #51 NM $8, #67 NM $9, #75 NM $7, #76 NM $7, #77 NM (2 Copies) $7, #78 NM $7; Dick Tracy #54 VF $53, #82 VF $40, #100 NM $70, #101 VF $40; Dotty Dripple #14 NM $7, #15 NM $7; Double-Dare Adventures #2 VF $40;

f Family Funnies #1 VF $26, #3 VF $15, #5 VF $15, #6 VF $14, #7 VF $14, #8 VF $14; Felix The Cat #63 NM $20, #67 NM $15, #70 FN (2 Copies) $5, #98 FN (2 Copies) $5; Felix's Nephews Inky & Dinky #2 NM (2 Copies) $30, #3 NM $30, #4 NM $30, #5 VF $18, #5 NM $18, #7 NM (5 Copies) $30; Fighting Fronts! #1 VF $22; First Love Illustrated #3 NM $35, #8 NM $25, #12 NM $15, #13 NM (2 Copies) $15, #14 NM $15, #27 NM $15, #28 NM $15, #30 NM $15, #32 NM $12, #33 NM $12, #36 NM (3 Copies) $20, #39 NM $12, #40 NM $12, #42 NM $12, #44 NM $12, #45 NM $12, #46 NM $8, #52 NM $10, #55 NM $10, #58 NM $10, #59 NM $10, #60 NM $10, #61 NM $10, #62 NM $10, #63 NM (2 Copies) $10, #65 NM $10, #66 NM (3 Copies) $10, #67 NM (4 Copies) $10, #68 NM (5 Copies) $10, #69 NM (5 Copies) $10, #70 NM (3 Copies) $10, #71 VF (2 Copies) $10, #72 NM $10, #74 NM $10, #75 NM $10, #77 NM $10, #78 VF $10, #79 VF $10, #82 NM $10, #84 NM $10, #86 NM $10, #87 NM $10, #89 NM $10; First Romance Magazine #1 NM $60, #2 NM $35, #3 NM $30, #8 NM $25, #9 NM $25, #11 NM 2 Copies) $15, #12 NM (2 Copies) $15, #16 NM $15, #21 NM $12, #25 NM (2 Copies) $12, #32 NM (2 Copies)$12, #35 NM $10, #39 NM $10, #40 NM (2 Copies) $10, #41 NM (4 Copies) $10, #42 NM (3 Copies) $10, #43 NM (3 Copies) $10, #44 NM (2 Copies) $10, #45 NM $10, #46 NM $10, #47 NM $10, #48 NM $10, #50 NM $10, #51 NM $10, #52 NM $10; Fruitman Special #1 NM (5 copies) $20;

SCHIFFMAN REPORT

continued from page 80

come along has just not paid off at a satisfaction level we have grown accustomed to when collecting Silver."

Golden Age

As we watch prices skyrocket (and Schomburg Timely's ALL become scarce as "hen's teeth"), collectors are looking for and discovering a few remaining pockets of hidden esoteric Golden Age books at relatively inexpensive prices. They've found artists that have made their mark again with collectors over this past Golden Age run-up, but in less mainstream titles.

For example, Matt Baker's beautiful covers and interiors have brought Fox Publishing to the forefront of collecting, yet he did some incredible work on lesser known Fox titles and other romance genre books. Collectors are also looking for Kamen, Wood, Kubert, Schomburg, and other well known "collectible" artists among others. and this puts demand pressure on the esoteric material Examples are Prison Break #1 FN $85; Seven Seas #5 GD $58; Seven Seas #5 FN $200; Fox Giant #1 FN $185; Romance Stories of True Love #52 VF $25; and Romance And Confessions #1 FN+ $100.

Meanwhile, prices and transactions for more "mainstream" Golden Age have continued unabated. In fact, if there is a given Golden Age key for sale, it will rarely if ever make its way to a public offering. Conventional wisdom holds that, in this market, if a book is offered to you for sale, it should be purchased NOW... because the odds of ever getting an opportunity again are slight.

This market is definitely a sellers market, and market knowledge is as important as ever. This is especially important in attempting to sail the unruly and turbulent waters of the Golden Age marketplace! Dealers are buying from other dealers, then selling for three to four times the price... and usually within the week.

Dealers that are accustomed to putting everything into their present catalogue must now hold back material so that each succeeding catalogue gets collector attention and is not full of "stale" material. Dealers are now forced to pay multiples of guide and charge even more to the average collector. When was the last time that you heard of dealers HAPPILY paying full guide? Me neither!

Some final sales figures of note: Action #2 GD+ $9,000, #25 VF+ $2200; Ghost #1 FN $165; Phantom Lady VF++ $2100; Captain America #17 FN $575; All Select #1 FN $3500, #2 FN- $650; Detective #38 GD $2800.

Until next time, thanks for reading.

g-h Green Hornet #2 VF $44; Harvey Collectors Comics #1 NM $10, #2 NM $6, #5 NM $6, #6 NM $5, #9 NM $5, #11 NM $3; Harvey Hits Magazine #5 NM $11, #29 NM (4 Copies) $25, #31 NM (2 Copies) $7, #32 NM $8, #35 NM (2 Copies) $7, #40 NM $6, #41 NM (2 Copies) $6, #46 NM $6, #56 NM $15, #83 NM $6, #89 NM $5, #96 NM $5; Harvey Pop Comics #1 NM (8 Copies) $13, #2 NM (7 Copies) $13; Hi-School Romance #1 FN/VF 31, #2 NM $30, #3 VF $13, #4 VF $13, #5 VF $13, #7 NM $20, #12 NM $12, #14 NM $12, #15 NM $12, #20 VF $8, #21 VF $7, #22 NM $12, #23 NM $12, #24 VF $7, #29 VF $7, #30 NM $12, #31 NM $12, #32 NM $16, #35 NM $10, #37 NM $5, #38 NM $5, #39 NM $10, #41 NM $10, #42 NM $12, #44 NM $10, #45 NM $10, #46 VF $5, #47 VF $5, #48 NM $10, #49 NM $10, #50 NM $10, #50 NM $10, #51 NM $10, #52 NM $10, #53 NM $10, #54 NM (2 Copies) $10, #55 NM $10, #56 NM (2 Copies) $10, #57 NM $10, #58 NM $10, #59 NM (2 Copies) $10, #63 NM $10, #64 NM $10, #65 NM $10, #66 NM $10, #67 NM $10, #68 NM $10, #69 NM $10, #70 NM $10, #71 NM $10, #72 NM $10, #73 NM $10;

h Hi-School Romance Date Book #1 NM (5 Copies) $25, #2 NM (4 Copies) $10, #3 NM (4 Copies) $10; Hot Stuff Sizzlers #1 VF $48, #8 FN/VF 9, #9 VF $12, #13 NM (2 Copies) $12, #14 NM $10, #15 NM (2 Copies) $12, #16 NM $12, #21 NM $8, #22 NM $9, #23 NM $9, #24 NM (2 Copies) $8, #25 NM (2 Copies) $9, #26 NM $8, #27 NM $8, #44 NM $9, #55 NM $6, #56 NM (2 Copies) $6, #57 NM $6, #58 NM $6, #59 NM $6; Hot Stuff The Little Devil #6 NM $60, #9 NM $40, #12 NM $30, #15 NM $30, #45 NM $12, #46 NM $12, #55 NM $12, #60 NM $8, #61 NM $7, #69 NM $7, #73 NM $6, #74 NM $7, #114 NM $5, #135 NM $5, #145 NM $5, Humphery Comics #13 NM $20, #14 NM $20, #16 NM $20, #17 NM $20, #18 NM $20;

j-l Jigsaw #1 NM (6 copies) $15 ea., #2 NM (7 copies) $12 ea.; Joe Palooka #9 NM $50, #21 VF $50, #70 NM $30, #71 NM $30, #76 VF $18, #93 VF $14, #94 NM $25, #106 NM $25, #107 NM $25, #113 NM $25; Junior Funnies #10 VF $12, #11 VF $11, #12 VF $11, #13 VF $11; Kerry Drake Detective Cases #13 VF $24, #17 NM $30, #21 NM $30, #23 NM $30, #24 NM $30, #25 NM (2 Copies) $30, #27 NM $30; Li'l Abner #61 NM $190, #64 NM $70, #65 NM $120, #67 NM $60; Little Audrey #2 NM $25, #27 NM $36, #32 NM $25, #34 NM $25, #35 VF $14, #36 VF $14, #38 NM $25; Little Audrey & Melvin #1 NM $45, #8 NM $14, #14 NM $9, #51 NM $6; Little Audrey TV TV Funtime #2 NM $25, #2 VF $12, #4 NM (2 Copies) $20, #13 NM $6, #25 NM $7,

Little Dot #1 VG/FN $175, #15 VF $40, #20 NM $60, #21 FN/VF (3 Copies) $12, #23 FN/VF (3 Copies) $12, #26 VF $16, #27 VF $16, #28 VF $16, #29 NM $25, #31 NM (2 Copies) $16, #32 NM (2 Copies) $20, #33 NM $16, #35 NM $16, #39 NM $25, #42 NM $15, #51 NM $15, #54 NM $15, #58 NM $15, #60 NM $15, #61 NM $12; Little Dot Dotland #1 NM (2 Copies) $60, #2 NM $22, #21 NM $7; Little Dot's Uncles & Aunts #1 NM $70, #5 NM $25, #24 NM $6, #52 NM $7; Little Lotta #13 VF $20, #18 VF (2 Copies) $20, #21 NM (2 Copies) $20, #27 NM $20, #42 NM $15, #44 NM $15, #50 NM $15, #51 NM $15, #56 NM $15, #120 NM $6; Little Lotta Foodland #1 NM $90, #2 NM $50, #3 NM $50, #4 NM $35, #5 NM $35, #6 NM $25, #7 NM $25, #8 NM $25, #9 NM $25, #10 NM $25, #11 NM $15, #12 NM $15, #13 NM $15, #14 NM $15, #15 NM $15, #16 NM $15, #17 NM $15, #18 NM $15, #19 NM $15, #20 NM $15, #21 NM $12, #22 NM $12, #23 NM $12, #24 NM $12, #25 NM $12, #26 NM $12, #27 NM $12, #28 NM $12, #29 NM $8; Little Max Comics #4 VF $17; Little Sad Sack #2 NM $10, #3 NM $10, #4 NM $10, Love Lessons #2 NM $25, #4 NM $20; Love Problems & Advice Illustrated #1 VF $48, #3 NM $25, #7 NM $25, #8 NM $25, #10 NM $25, #12 NM $15, #14 NM $20, #17 VF $10, #18 NM $15, #19 NM $15, #25 NM $15, #26 NM $10, #30 NM $15, #32 NM $12, #34 NM $12, #35 NM $12, #36 NM $12, #37 NM $7, #37 VF $7, #41 NM (2 Copies) $12, #42 NM (2 Copies) $12, #43 NM $12; Love Stories Of Mary Worth #1 FN/VF $18;

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n-r New Frontiers Giveaway VG (2 Copies) $5; Playful Little Audrey #7 NM $36, #21 NM $15, #22 NM $15, #67 NM $9, #118 NM $5, #120 NM $5; Race For The Moon #1 VF $64, #2 VF (4 Copies) $120, #3 VF (2 Copies) $125; Richie Rich #15 NM (2 Copies)$60, #22 NM $45, #61 NM $15, #62 NM $15, #63 NM $15, #64 NM (2 Copies) $15, #65 NM (2 Copies) $15, #68 NM $5, #92 NM $10, #94 NM $10, #95 NM $10, #96 NM $10, #97 NM $10, #98 NM $10, #100 NM $15, #101 NM $8, #104 NM $8, #105 NM $8, #107 NM $8, #193 NM $5, #194 NM $5; Richie Rich & Casper #16 NM $4, #44 NM $3; Richie Rich & Dollar The Dog #24 NM $3; Richie Rich & Gloria #1 NM $12, #25 NM $3;

Richie Rich & His Girlfriends #13 NM $3, #5 NM $7; Richie Rich & His Mean Cousin Reggie #1 NM $8, #2 NM $6, #3 NM (2 Copies) $6; Richie Rich Bank Books #15 NM $6, #33 NM $4; Richie Rich, Casper, & Wendy #1 NM $5; Richie Rich Diamonds #1 NM $40, #3 NM $20, #24 NM $5, #43 NM $4;

Richie Rich Dollars & Cents #1 NM $90, #1 NM $120, #20 NM $20, #21 NM $10, #22 NM $10, #25 NM $10, #26 NM $10, #27 NM $10, #31 NM $8, #34 NM $8, #35 NM $8, #38 NM $8, #39 NM $8, #40 NM $8, #41 NM $8, #42 NM $8, #43 NM $8, #44 NM $6, #45 NM $6, #46 NM $6, #49 NM $5, #50 NM $5, #57 NM $5, #107 NM $3, #108 NM $3, #109 NM $3; Richie Rich Fortunes #5 NM $20, #7 NM $10, #8 NM $10, #23 NM $5; Richie Rich Gold & Silver #4 NM $10, #12 NM $3, #29 NM $3, #31 NM $3; Richie Rich Inventions #13 NM $3; Richie Rich Jackpots #1 NM $40, #2 NM $20, #11 NM $6; Richie Rich Millions #1 NM $150, #19 NM $22, #31 NM $10, #33 NM $10, #35 NM $10, #36 NM $10, #37 NM $10, #39 NM $10, #40 NM $10, #41 NM $10, #46 NM $10, #47 NM $10, #49 NM $5, #50 NM (3 Copies) $7, #51 NM $5, #52 NM $7, #75 NM $5, #87 NM $5, #89 NM $5, #91 NM $5, #110 NM $3, #111 NM $3, #112 NM $3, #113 NM $3; Richie Rich Money World #1 NM $40, #9 NM $7, #28 NM $4; Richie Rich Success Stories #11 NM $15, #32 NM $10, #33 NM $10, #34 NM $10, #35 NM $10, #36 NM $10, #38 NM $10, #40 NM $8, #42 NM $8; Richie Rich Vault Of Mystery #1 NM $20, #2 NM (2 Copies) $10, #3 NM (2 Copies) $10, #4 NM (2 Copies) $10, #5 NM (2 Copies) $10, #6 NM (2 Copies) $10, #11 NM $5, #23 NM $4; Ripley's Believe It Or Not! #3 NM $50, #4 VF (2 Copies) $35, Romance Stories Of True Love #45 NM $15, #46 NM $15, #48 NM $15, #51 NM $15, #52 NM $15;

s Speed Comics #37 NM $170, #38 NM $90, #39 NM $170; Spooky #13 VF $16, #14 VF $16, #22 NM $15, #41 NM $10, #42 NM $10, #43 NM $10, #44 NM (2 Copies) $10, #45 NM $10, #46 NM $10, #53 NM $10, #54 NM $10, #58 NM $10, #63 NM $9, #121 NM $4, #129 NM $6, #130 NM $6, #131 NM $6, #132 NM (2 Copies)$6, #133 NM $4, #134 NM $4, #135 NM $4, #136 NM $6, #137 NM $4, #138 NM $4, #139 NM $4, #140 NM $4, #141 NM $3, #144 NM $3, #145 NM $3, #146 NM $3, #147 NM $3, #148 NM $3, #149 NM $3, #150 NM (2 Copies) $3, #151 NM (2 Copies) $3, #152 NM (2 Copies) $3, #153 NM (2 Copies) $3, #154 NM (2 Copies) $3, #155 NM $3; Spooky Haunted House #9 NM $3, #12 NM $3, #15 NM $3; Spooky Spooktown #1 NM (4 Copies) $90, #5 NM $40, #6 NM $20, #8 NM $20, #12 NM $10, #14 NM

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ROBERT ROTER
Pacific Comic Exchange
Beverly Hills, California

The following is a list of recent sales from the exchange. Please note the sale price of Action at $137,500, setting an all time record price for as single comic.

Action #1 VF $137,500, #2 FR $1,450; All-Star #8 GD $1,760, #10 MT (Mile High Copy) $7,150, #32 VF/NM $1,430; All-Winners #2 VF/NM $2,750, #21 FN $1,500; All American #102 VF/NM $1,375; All Flash #1 FN $2,750; Amazing Fantasy #15 VG/FN $3,300; Batman #1 PR $1,760, #1 VG+ $4,400, #1 VF/NM $44,000, #16 FN/VF $2,400, #16 FN/VF $2,100, #28 VF/NM $1,150, #49 VF/NM $1,400; Big All American #1 FN $1,650; Boy Commandos #1 VF/NM $2,475; Captain America #7 NM $5,280; Captain Marvel Adventures #1 FN $3,850; Detective #28 FN/VF $2,200, #138 VF++ $1,150; Flash Comics #100 VF/VF+ $2,035, #104 FN/VF $1,760; Green Lantern (GA) #1 VF/VF+ $2,750, #1 FN $1,650, #1 VF $7,150, #36 VF+ $1,100, #38 VF+ $1,540; Human Torch #2 VG $2,640; Incredible Hulk #6 NM $2,200; Kite Fun Book #54 VF/NM $1,760; Leading #1 FN/VF $2,000; MAD #6 MT (Gaines File Copy) $1,265, #7 NM/MT (Gaines File Copy) $1,475, #10 NM/MT (Gaines File Copy) $1,265, #15 NM/MT (Gaines File Copy) $1,320 More Fun #13 VF $1,735, #54 FN $1,045; Movie Comics #1 VF $1,045; New York World's Fair #1940 FN $3,025; Showcase #11 VF/VF+ $1,375, Star Spangled #65 MT (Mile High Copy) $7,150, #84 MT $1,320; Superman #24 VF/NM $1,375, #53 VF/VF+ $1,760; Two Fisted Tales #18 NM/MT (Gaines File Copy) $1,430; Vault Of Horror #12 FN $1,100; Wonder Woman #1 VG/FN $2,750, #45 VF/NM $1,320; World's Best #1 VF $5,500; World's Finest #2 VF+ $2,750.

JOHN SNYDER MARKET REPORT

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$10, #18 NM $10, #21 NM $7, #35 NM $5, #36 NM $5, #37 NM $5, #38 NM $4, #39 NM $5, #41 NM $3, #55 NM $3, #63 NM $3, #64 NM $3, #65 NM $3, #66 NM $4, Spyman #1 NM (2 Copies) $40, #2 NM (2 Copies) $30, #3 NM (2 Copies) $30; Steve Canyon #1 FN/VF 50, #2 NM $60, #4 NM $55, #6 VF $55, #6 VF $70; Steve Canyon's Strictly For The Birds NM $70; Stumbo Tinytown #1 NM $100, #2 NM $60, #4 VF (3 Copies) $25, #5 NM (2 Copies) $40, #6 NM (4 Copies) $30, #7 NM $30, #8 NM $30, #9 NM (4 Copies) $30, #10 NM (2 Copies) $30, #11 NM (2 Copies) $24, #12 VF (2 Copies) $19, #13 NM (2 Copies) $30; Super Richie #4 NM $5; Sweet Love #1 VF $30, #5 FN/VF $20;

Tastee-Freez Comics #1 NM $45; Teen-Age Brides #1 NM (4 Copies) $50, #2 NM $30, #3 NM $25, #11 NM $15; Teen-Age Romances #9 NM $10; Terry & The Pirates #26 VF $32, Friendly Ghost, Casper #18 NM $30, #21 NM $25, #23 NM (2 Copies) $25, #24 NM $25, #31 NM (2 Copies) $12, #34 NM $12, #40 NM $12, #42 NM $12, #74 NM $9, #78 NM $9, #163 NM $7, #164 NM (2 Copies) $4, #165 NM $4, #173 NM $4; Katzenjammer Kids #25 NM (2 Copies) $20, #27 NM $20, Man Who Woudn't Quit FN $15,

Spirit #1 NM $75; Thrills Of Tomorrow #17 VF (2 Copies) $40, #18 VF (2 Copies) $26, #19 NM (3 Copies) $150, #20 NM (3 Copies) $150; Tomb Of Terror #5 VF $55, #6 VF (4 Copies) $55, #7 VF (7 Copies) $55, #8 NM (6 Copies) $70, #9 VF (5 Copies) $55, #10 VF (3 Copies) $55, #11 NM $70, #12 VF/NM 60, #13 NM (3 Copies) $90, #14 NM $90, #16 VF $66,

Trapped VG/FN $4; True 3-D 2 NM $45; True Bride's Experiences #8 NM $30, #9 NM $20, #12 NM $10, #14 NM $10, #15 NM $10, #16 NM (2 Copies) $30; True Bride-To-Be-Romances #18 NM (2 Copies) $15, #19 NM (2 Copies) $15, #20 NM (2 Copies) $15, #22 NM (2 Copies) $15, #24 NM $20, #25 NM $15, #28 NM $15; True War Experiences #1 NM $60, #2 NM (2 Copies) $25, #3 NM $25, #4 NM $25; Tuff Ghosts Starring Spooky #1 VF $36; TV Casper & Company #6 NM $15, #7 NM $15, #10 NM $15, #23 NM $9, #38 NM $4;

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Wendy The Good Little Witch #20 NM $15; Wendy Witch World #2 NM $40, #11 NM $15, #21 NM $7; What's In It For You? VG (3 Copies) $8 ea.; Witches Tales #2 NM (3 Copies) $90 ea., #3 NM (3 Copies) $60 ea., #4 VF $45, #4 NM (3 Copies) $60 ea., #5 VG 15, #7 VF $40, #13 VF (2 Copies) $33 ea., #18 NM $70, #18 NM $61, #20 NM $70, #21 VF $70, #21 NM $70, #22 VF $48, #23 VF $48, #26 VF (4 Copies) $31 ea., #27 VF $31, #27 NM $31, #28 NM $50.

–END MARKET REPORTS

Golden Age for the Connoisseur

Action Comics
41 VF+ $650
42 VF- $825
60 VF- $425

All-Star Comics
21 VF- $575
43 F/VF $325

All-Winners
3 VF- $1250

Batman
14 FN $800
16 VF- $3250
23 VF- $925
25 F/VF $800
27 VF $975
29 VF-/VF $575

Captain America
4 VF $3950
17 VF $1700
19 VF- $975
51 VF- $700
52 VF $775
55 VF $750
63 VF $750

Detective Comics
43 VF $1050
51 F/VF $525
67 FN $495

Human Torch
5 VF/VF+ ... $3250

Marvel Mystery Comics
11 VF+ $3950
51 VF/NM $950

Star Spangled Comics
7 F/VF $2750
21 NM-* $950
27 NM- $1075
28 NM- $1075

Sub-Mariner Comics
3 VF/VF+ ... $3500
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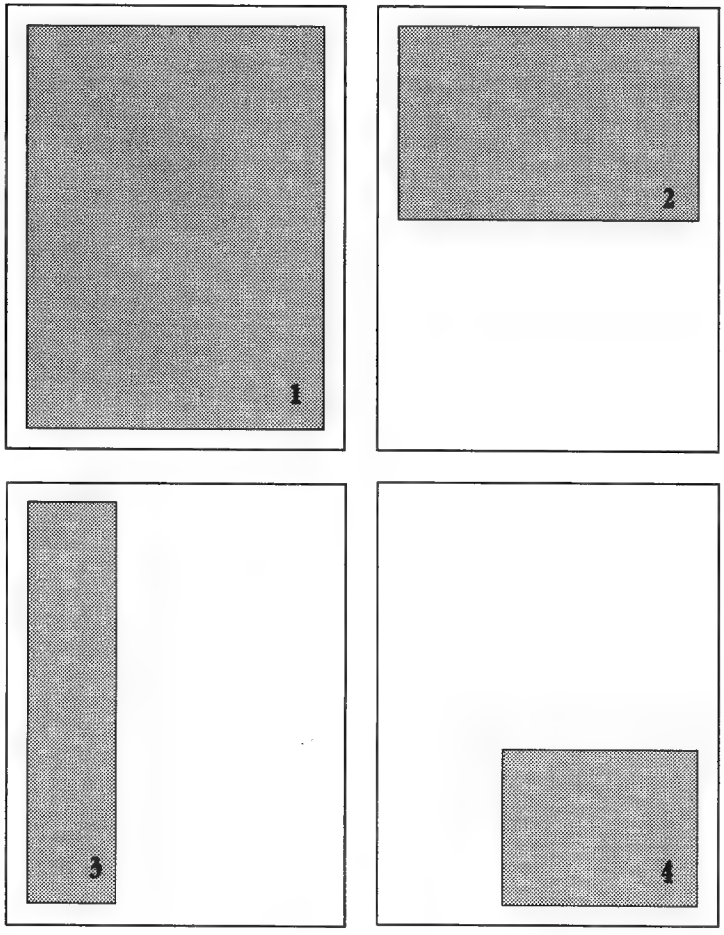

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Kiss Of Death

Very glad to see CBM back! Here's my $48 for a 12 issue sub. I hope that this is not the "kiss of death" for your mag as last time I subscribed the first issue I received was the one in which you announced you were ceasing publication (CBM #21)!!! Better luck this time!

Gary Weickart, New York

I hope it isn't either!

Thanks Pat!

The lesser known Golden Age Science Fiction/Mystery characters are often excellent and just as often un-noticed by fandom. A personal thanks to Pat S. Calhoun for his many articles over the past several years that address these "unsung" stars of comics. Every book he mentions is not only of interest, but also affordable. That makes a big difference to me, as I'm on a limited budget. The wonderful thing about collecting comics is there seems to be really nice older material still available but at affordable prices. I would like to have checklist from Pat in a later issue of CBM that lists his top 50 or 100 books that are inexpensive yet neat. Your entire magazine continues to make me glad I'm a comic book collector! Keep those great articles coming!

Malcom McHenery, Florida

Cheaper Than Buying Originals!

I had been looking for a good fanzine years before your fanzine came along. I tried writing to the fanzines that were in a competitors guide and never got a response from anybody. Since I am fascinated with Golden Age books (non DC and Marvel)) your book is a perfect source for information on art work from this era. The same goes for Silver Age as well as modern non DC and Marvel books. I almost did not renew my subscription as I am on a very tight budget... but your magazine is cheaper than buying the originals! The only thing I would have you do differently is to feature more examples of artwork, particularly outstanding pieces. So here's my $48 for a year's subscription.

David Waldron, Tennessee

SS #5

Been with the original CBM since issue #2 and have enjoyed every word, every picture! I look forward to another run of CBM and can't wait until #100. By the way, your article on DC 100 Page Super Spectacular was great and it is nice to know that SS #5 really does exist.

Gary A. Hackenburg, North Carolina

First Horror Comic?

Michelle Nolan's article "Fearsome Fawcett's of the 50's" (May 1995), says that "following a few one-shots and two-shot comics in the late 1940's the first regularly published horror comic was ACG's "Adventures Into The Unknown."

Gilberton published "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" in August 1943 making it the first horror comic. Couple this with the fact that Classic Illustrated had ten horror comics all appearing in the early to mid 1940's surely qualifies them as the first to venture into horror with more than one or two comics.

If you want horror, look at the Churchyard scene in "Great Expectations" which was pulled because of content in 1947. All the Classic Illustrated horror comics are quite scarce... check it out!! By the way, what a great mag.

Dave Rowlandson, Ontario

I think you're both right and here's why. You get points for pointing out that several early Classics were truly "horror" comics. An excellent revelation that most historians, authors, and collectors overlook. I also agree with Michelle's statement when she says that AITU was the first regularly published horror comic. Perhaps it is the definition of "regularly published" that prevents a "meeting of the minds" on this one. What do you think CBM readers?

Shuster Ghosts

From your letter column, I see a lot of comments about CBM, but no one seems to realize that a giant share of the success of the magazine is due to the great graphics and layout, which I assume is Lisa's doing. She deserves our thanks also.

Like a number of people, I enjoyed Henry Mietkiewicz's article on Joe Shuster. His artwork has always held a special magic for me, especially his very early Superman. It still evokes great memories for me. I do, however, have a question about the page from Action Comics #22 which was reproduced on page 57 of the article. Although the layout was probably by Shuster, I believe that the artwork was by Paul Cassidy, one of Shuster's unsung "ghosts" from the early days. Paul Cassidy did a great deal of early Superman for which Shuster is usually given credit. I mention this only to comply with the "prime CBM directive" (which is almost as important as the Prime Directive of the Federation) which states "Give credit where credit is Due." Keep up the great work.

Hugh O'Kennon, Virginia

I also saw a few "glimpses" of Cassidy in the page you cite, but cannot absolutely confirm it. Perhaps a CBM reader who is an avid art devote can help us with a "positive ID." And Hugh, you are absolutely right. There are several Shuster "ghosts" that never get any credit for their often brilliant work. I would welcome any information that might help me to these early artists their due credit in print. Thanks for taking time to write Hugh.

Nolan Writes

I love Matt Nelson's "Unseen Gold" feature! It's one of the best magazine story ideas ever. I have several of the "Unseen Gold" super hero comics myself, so if Matt wants to contact me via CBM, I'll be happy to help with the information, etc. Keep up the great work, Matt! It's a winner!

As for the Gerber's Photo Journal Guide itself... as wonderful as it is, I feel it is nowhere near 99 percent complete! He would have had to publish another two books to be 99 percent complete of all the newsstand comics published between 1933-59 alone, much less the 1960's issues (and he did include quite a few of those).

Dan Stevenson (a fabulous comic book indexer who lives in Southern California) has documented the existence of 37,297 comic published between 1933 and 1959, give or take about 1008 that neither Dan nor I are sure exist. I can also vouch that there were, indeed, more than 37,000 comics published, having seen perhaps 34,000 of them in person.

Gerber included fewer than 20,000 of these 1933-59 comics in his monumental Photo-Journal (the other 1,000-plus issues shown were from 1960-on). He did a wonderful job, generally concentrating on the most popular titles, the best cover artists, etc.. (I still wonder why he didn't run every Fawcett super hero cover, yet he did run a lot of newspaper reprint comics... in which there is less collector interest.)

Also, numerous dates for the comics listed in the Photo-Journal are incorrect, other factual errors, misplaced photos, etc. As an example, consider the covers of Strange Adventures #30 and #50 which are transposed.

By the way, the Strange Adventures title is a great example of another frustration I have with PJG. The first thirty are pictured along with a few others, but the title ran 111 issues through 1959 alone. Many of these Strange Adventures covers are true classics, and I wish they were included.

I am also skeptical of the Photo-Journal's scarcity index.! It seems highly unlikely that comics for which I have been actively searching more than 20 years can rate an SI of 4 or 5! I feel that many non-super hero comics from the 1950's are rated far too common. However , I have found the listed scarcity index for the majority of the super hero comics. to be either close to... or right on the mark!

Obviously, these points are personal and subjective, but I'm just trying to point out that the Photo-Journal is not as "comprehensive" as has been suggested by some. Even so, I still acknowledge it as a fabulous contribution to the body of comic book knowledge!

Michelle Nolan, California

Double Take

Glad to see you're back doing Comic Book Marketplace. I was in a comic book store a few weeks ago and on my way out I did a double take. CBM #22 with a beautiful eye catching cover sitting on the rack. Needless to say I purchased it and enjoyed it immensely. It's better than ever. A much needed addition to our hobby. Anyway, here's my check for a 12 issue subscription and best wishes for continued success. Welcome back.

Bob Reid, New York

Thrilled To Death

I was thrilled to death on the turn of events that revived CBM as a forum for spreading knowledge of comics. Its return was long awaited. Although the Overstreet Monthly's and Quarterly's were an improvement from just a guide, it sorely lacked the exchange of information on the Golden/Silver Age books. I commend you guys on educating the collecting populous on the Golden and Silver Age eras instead of feeding the same old rhetoric that a lot of other magazines provide.

In an effort to get my inputs in early on what type of articles and information I prefer to see in upcoming issues, I have developed a list of topics (see list).

I know these requests are tall orders, and will take an experienced collector or dealer involved in these matters to be able to produce articles on these topics; but, I have faith in you and your abundant staff of writers. The "Five Fave Covers" poll you are conducting is an excellent idea, educating readers and spreading the word on the variety of titles out there that most of us collectors are not aware of. Keep up the great work and share the knowledge.

Stephen Ritter, New Mexico

"Share The Knowledge" is another CBM prime directive.

So Long Don

I was very sorry to hear of the passing of Don Heck. I though that Mr. Calhoun's tribute to him was elegant, well written, and most of all honest. (So many of this kind of tribute are hollow.)

Mr. Heck was important to me because of his early Iron-Man work and because of his great contribution to pre hero Marvel books. I will miss him and his work.

Greg Martinez, Texas

As will I.

Thanks to everyone who wrote in this issue. If you'd care to write, send your letters to:

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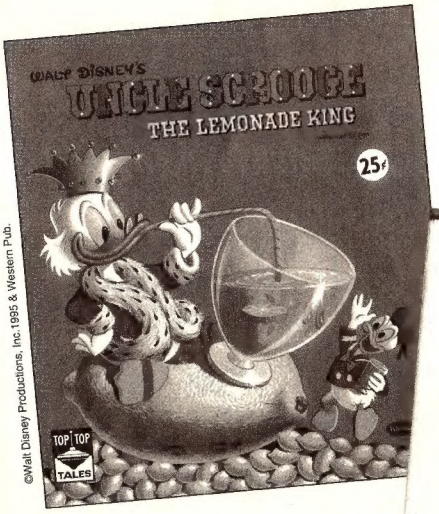

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Pictures by Carl Barks

There perhaps is no greater thrill for any writer or artist than when he/she finally gets to see his/her name in print... forever memorialized on that fragile piece of wood pulp. For many artists working in the anonymity of a large studio, though, it sometimes took many years before the publisher, felt comfortable publicizing the employee's creative skills. So it was to be with the legendary Carl Barks. As amazing as it seems, the first time Barks received published credit for his art work was not for a comic book!

In the 1960s, Whitman Publishing Company produced a series of children's books under the name of "Top Top Tales." Barks did the pencil roughs for the rare and hard to find title "Uncle Scrooge the Lemonade King" (Top Top Tales No. 2465, 1960). The story (28 pages) tells of the escalating "Lemonade Stand War" between Scrooge and Lemonade Leo.

Reminiscent of the Uncle Scrooge "Maharajah of Howduyustan" classic from *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories* #138 (March, 1952), Scrooge and Leo battle to the somewhat predictable ending. In addition to Barks' listing, Norman McGary is credited as the colorist.

This obscure Disney duck/Barks collectible almost never occurs above Fine condition. Pictured upper left, is the extremely rare high grade copy from the Western File (complete with the original "25¢" sticker) which was originally part of the Overstreet Collection. At right is page one from another copy with a birthday dedication... *"To Jimmie on his third birthday Feb-15-61 from Gary Peters."*

This elusive "Silver Age" book continues to be avidly sought by many Barks and Disney completists. ■

Have something you think would be of interest to your fellow collectors? Send it to Fandom Flashbacks, Comic Book Marketplace, P. O. Box 180900, Coronado, CA 92178-0900 or Fax us at (619) 437-1993.

CONTRIBUTED BY MICHAEL ALLEN

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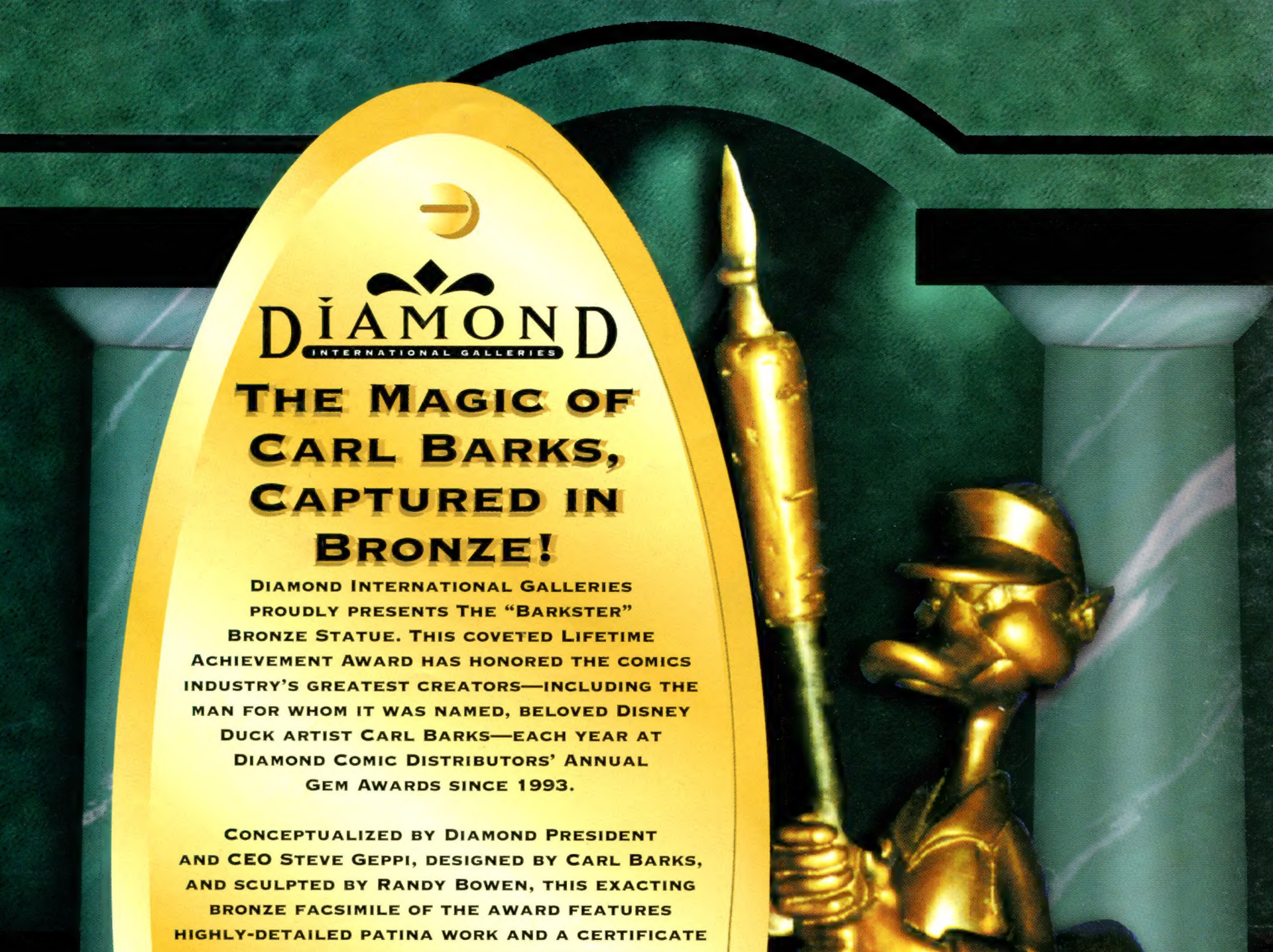

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